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IDEOLOGICAL FACTORS IN SELECTED FIELDS OF POLICY - MAKING IN INDIA.

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A B S T R A C T

The thesis deals with the relationship between ideology and policy-making. The main concern is the development of agrarian policy in India since Independence, but this topic necessarily has roots and ramifications which extend much further, both backwards into time and laterally into other aspects of policy.

The aim is also to consider how relevant are various sociological definitions of, and approaches to, ideology, for dealing with the problem of its relationship to policy-making. The question of whether ideology is to be defined as manifest doctrine, or as underlying and possibly implicit evaluative assumption, is as important as whether ideology is to be interpreted primarily in a psychological, social structural or functional 'systems' context. An application of some of these approaches to the successive stages of political debate in India shows that no one type of approach can by itself adequately account for the nature of prevailing ideology and its relationship to policy or potential policy. But the various approaches may be subdivided and combined to provide ideal-type characterisations of the way in which ideology plays an active role in political situations. It appears, however, that in such ideal-types the elements of a power - or structure - based interpretation of ideology tend to dominate.

Finally, there is the problem of how the changing nature of 'official' ideology and policy in India, manifested in the swing from an advocacy of relatively socialist to relatively 'pragmatic' solutions, is to be described. There is a danger of constructing a false dichotomy between 'ideology' on the one hand and 'pragmatism' on the other. This can only be resolved by looking at the way in which the role of ideology has changed over time, and especially in the context of the rising and declining power of Congress and the Government.

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"The primary problem of Asia is probably the agrarian problem... in India something has been done in the past few years in regard to the agrarian problem and the semi-feudal conditions that existed then. Pretty far-reaching changes are being made now. We are putting an end to the big landlord system, the zamindari system.... And so one of the major upsetting features in Asia has been controlled in India because of this policy that we have pursued in regard to land" (Nehru 1949 quoted in Norman 1965: 496).

"A total disregard in the current phase of land reform of the right of social groups to equal treatment; the right of individual cultivators to floors and ceilings; the long - cherished hope of the landless agricultural workers to a share in land...have very much watered down the utility of zamindari abolition, leaving village India almost completely disillusioned" (Singh 1961: 35-36).

"In 1950 the U.P. Legislative Assembly passed the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reform Act. Should one repeat

what so many writers have said before, that this law changed practically nothing, since it only meant that the tenants changed their name to sirdars and paid to the state what they had previously paid to the zamindar?" (Etienne 1968: 58 & 60).

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Policy and criticisms of policy: the agrarian case.

Post-Independence policies in India have given rise to at least two types of literature. The first might be called the apologetic and explanatory. It seeks to elucidate and advance a rationale for the mechanism of planning in particular. The second type is the post mortem variety, and, as the label suggests, seeks to analyse where and how the process of planning has gone astray. This is an attitude which has been encouraged by the Planning Commission itself, perhaps with varying degrees of enthusiasm at different stages in the development of planning, but nevertheless with important results, as some of the Programme Evaluation Organisation Reports show.[1]

That such critiques of planning and of the policies

associated with planning should have emerged so readily is not surprising. It would be more surprising if there were not a good many ways in which specific policies were felt to have failed, or at least to have underfulfilled themselves, and it would be regrettable if such criticisms could not be expressed. What is particularly interesting, however, is the range of approaches which is manifest in these critiques, and the range of factors which they indicate as being relevant for any attempt to understand the gap between policy proposals and the achievement of results which are generally felt to be satisfactory.

The range of criticisms is well-illustrated by attitudes to one particular set of policies, those relating to the agrarian and land reform measures which have been implemented in India since Independence.[2] Perhaps the most vocal observers and sections of political opinion tend to be those with the greatest sense of disillusionment and frustration, which makes it difficult to assess how representative such views are. Nevertheless, accusations that certain policies or aspects of policies have failed, or have produced little material change, have been made sufficiently often to indicate that the disappointment is fairly widespread.

Obstacles to implementation. The reasons given for

dissatisfaction with the results of the reforms are various but there is at least one major divide amongst the types of assessments made. First, there are those analyses which may be described as being in the realm of explanation, and of explanation in pragmatic terms. They cite a series of factors which have acted as obstacles in the path of policy implementation. Several such factors come immediately to mind. For instance, studies of the administrative machinery at state, district and local level, have revealed inefficiences due to the position of particular officials. Dube, for instance, described in the mid-50's the ambivalence, and therefore the inadequacy, of the role played by the Collector or Deputy Commissioner at the district level of the Community Development hierarchy (Dube 1958). Under the Raj he had been a traditional law and order executive, and his development duties were now regarded as a minor addition to the traditional role.

It has also been asserted that directives and policy plans become diluted or distorted in the process of transmission. An example of this is described by Retzlaff in connection with the activities of a Land Management Committee in the Western U.P. Rajput-dominated village of Khalapur. Under the 1950 Zamindari Abolition Act, this committee of the Gaon

Panchayat, or village council, was instructed to distribute any available village land and to give the landless labourers preference in this. But the Khalapur L.M.C. in fact sold the land at Rs. 200 per bigha, to the comparatively wealthy, and mostly Rajput, landowners who could afford the price (Retzlaff 1962).

This is perhaps less a failure of communication and more a matter of deliberate evasion, of which many other examples can be cited, especially in relation to attempted land reforms. Below the state level, resistance from the various local vested interests and delaying tactics such as parliamentary filibustering, ultra vires legislation, and massive exploitation of loop-holes in the legislation, have all been recognised as important obstacles.

Also there is the more elusive level of "cultural resistance" which has been explored extensively by sociologists, anthropologists, and agricultural economists alike. This has sometimes been supposed to rest on so-called "rational" attitudes, and sometimes on "irrational" ones. An example of the former type of explanation is a study by Sanwal which came to the conclusion that peasant reluctance to co-operate with the advice of the Community Development gram sewak, or village level worker, and to accept, for

instance, new crop strains, may have sprung from an awareness that the traditional strains, even if less productive, yield indispensable by-products, or from the belief that, in a subsistence situation, it is better to use a low-yielding but safe crop, rather than a high-yielding but more vulnerable one (Sanwal 1965).

Kusum Nair, on the other hand, falls into the category of those who draw attention to the "irrational", even if understandable, aspects of cultural and psychological resistance. She describes the failure of individual cultivators in Andhra to make use of newly available irrigation facilities. She quotes the example of Venkatararam Reddy, who "could irrigate another 30 acres with T.B.P. (Tungabhadra Project). But he ...refuses. He simply says: 'I am satisfied' " (Nair 1961: 69). Another confounding case is that of the Mysore cultivators who, as soon as their income went up even marginally, preferred to convert the increment into leisure or into conspicuous consumption, rather than into any kind of tangible improvement in living conditions, let alone into investible resources. Kusum Nair remarks: "The consumption of surplus income seems to begin and end with less personal work in the field and with the taking of coffee and better food in a hotel and going

regularly to the cinema...80% of these peasants in Mandya would still be in debt. Nor is the increase in their prosperity reflected in any other visible improvement in the manner and condition of their life" (56). The general conclusion is that in many rural communities there tends to be a cut-off point in aspirations. "The upper level they are prepared to strive for is limited and it is the floor generally that is bottomless" (192-3). Hence,"there cannot be any economics in isolation from sociology and social psychology" (194).

The important point about such explanations of policy underfulfilment, is that they accept the policies essentially on their own terms, and assess them within these limits. The most explicit intention of each particular measure has in some way been frustrated, and this can be traced to tangible factors, whether in the fabric of administrative machinery, or in the nature of the social environment. An exploration and cataloguing of such factors can go a long way towards explaining both the short-fall of the policies and the frustration which this has engendered.

Disagreement about means. It is unlikely, however, that such a catalogue would provide an exhaustive set of reasons for the widespread feeling that the land reform and Community

Development policies have, in some sense, failed. An enumeration of administrative bottlenecks and tensions, failures of communication between the centre and the periphery, vested interest resistance and cultural prejudice, cannot yield a total explanation. It is at this point that the second species of critique which has been advanced becomes relevant. This is the kind of criticism which queries the actual intention of the policies concerned, and implies that their design was in some sense faulty or inadequate.

This kind of criticism again falls into two camps. First, there are some areas of concrete disagreement about pragmatic possibility. It may be argued that the policy-framers actually miscalculated in supposing that a given end could be subserved by a particular means. This is particularly relevant where it has been implied that the ends of social justice and economic efficiency can be harnessed together and jointly furthered by the same policy-tool, such as for example, land redistribution or co-operative farming. It may be argued that such suppositions were misconceived, that as a matter of fact, for instance, redistributing land or bestowing ownership rights or security of tenure, turns out actually to lower the rate of investment, to lower productivity and to lower the marketable surplus available. A case in

point is a Hyderabad study, which showed that, after the extension of security of tenure, the index of productivity on owner-cultivated lands declined by 7.2 points in 1953-4, whilst that of tenant-cultivators increased by only 0.8 points. It seemed, therefore, that the land reform had reduced overall agricultural efficiency (Quoted in Sundaram 1962: 517).

Here the disagreement is about the relation between means and ends, and is resolvable by resorting to the evidence. This does not, of course, mean that the policy implication will thereafter become uncontroversial. It may still be argued that the evidence is insufficient, that the policy has not been given a fair chance, or that there are other predisposing factors which have been absent and which can be introduced into the situation. Nevertheless, this kind of debate lies basically in the realm of "facts" as Ginsberg, for instance, defines them, in the course of arguing for the reducibility of some parts of supposedly irreducible evaluative arguments. "Fuller knowledge", he suggests, "may not unreasonably be expected to bring about some convergence of views now widely opposed, or at least greater tolerance of divergence" (Ginsberg 1963: 413).

Value-judgments about ends: the relevance of ideology. It is clear, however, that this is not the only way in which disagreement about ends and means can occur. One large source of criticism of actual policy is necessarily provided by the conflict between the various ends which are held to be desirable. This is the core of irreducible values which remains in political disagreement after the conflicts which Ginsberg describes as being open to rational debate on the grounds of empirical evidence, have been subtracted. In the end, value judgments "cannot be reduced without remainder to assertions of what is, has been, will or can be" (413).

It is certainly the case that, in any political situation, the expectations engendered by a given policy will be influenced by value judgments about the ultimate ends to which the policy is seen as contributing, as well as by more neutral empirical judgments about the immediate concrete effects of the given measure. In a pluralist society, or one which is in any way segmented or stratified, the hopes and expectations of various groups vis à vis a particular reform, will almost certainly diverge. Hence in the case of the "umbrella" policy of land reform, or the even more omnibus category of agrarian reconstruction at large there was bound to be a whole range of justifications, even

for a fairly closely defined series of policies, and therefore an inevitable element of dissatisfaction and frustration in some quarters with the final outcome. An examination of the literature reveals that there certainly has been, and still is, a wide divergence of attitudes to land reform in India, and hence of long-term perspectives into which current policies are seen to fit, and degrees of disagreement about how adequate or inadequate present measures must be deemed to be.

But to present the situation only in these terms runs dangerously close to over-simplification. It is not the case that there has been a series of centrally-devised and administered policies with definable aims, and a series of distinct criticisms from clearly differentiated foci of opposition. The role of values or of ideology has been a much more highly diffused and perhaps even elusive one. The policies themselves have often been ambiguous as to intention or implication. In this sense, their "ideological content" can hardly be treated as constant or homogeneous. As sociologists have often illustrated, sets of values, or ideologies, may be supposed to have many functions and determinants, and to operate at many levels. The problem then is to find reference points which will be sufficiently

specific to shed light on the way in which ideology may be an active and perhaps even a confusing factor in the development of specific policies and their implementation.

Definitions of ideology. At this point, it seems necessary to elucidate the way in which ideology is to be defined if it is to be found relevant to the development and implementation of specific policies. It cannot merely be assumed to be synonymous with "values" or "value judgments". Already, two kinds of ideological factors, or two aspects of ideology, have been cited as relevant to the land reform and agrarian structure case. First, it has been pointed out that images of a given policy held by various sections of the community, and their expectations of it, will be a function of their own scales of priorities or, in other words, of their particular ideological position. In this sense, ideology is used to denote a set of political values and ideas held explicitly by individuals or groups. Secondly, it has been suggested that policies themselves manifest some degree of ideological content by virtue of the assumptions which they appear to make about the kinds of ends which ought to be striven for. But this attributing of ideological content to policies is itself problematic. Is the ideological element to be identified from the official

justifications which accompany a policy? Or is it for the observer to interpret and abstract from the policy its "real" kernel of value-assumptions? The same problem can of course be posed of the previous case also. Are the ideologies professed by groups and parties to be taken at face value, or is it legitimate to look for the underlying and perhaps concealed, ideological core within? Ideology clearly has been, and is, used in both senses; both of a set of expressed ideas on its own terms and of the less explicit normative elements which are embedded in them.

A large part of the problem lies in the fact that any attempt to define ideology, or to identify its uses, cannot be merely a semantic exercise, but already trespasses onto theoretical and controversial ground. The question of whether or not ideologies are to be considered as self-contained bodies of rational constructs, or whether they are to be analysed in relation to extraneous social factors, and if so to <u>which</u> such factors, is the very subject matter of the sociology of knowledge. It therefore seems apposite to consider briefly some contrasting treatments of ideology, both to determine what the reference points of the term ideology should be, and to discover whether concrete theories about the nature of ideology can be made to extend themselves

into being theories about the role which ideology may be supposed to play in the process of policy formation and implementation.

Sociological analyses of ideology.

Pejorative implications. The first issue to be dealt with is the question of whether or not ideology can still be used with a general and a purely descriptive reference. As Geertz has pointed out, "it is one of the minor ironies of modern intellectual history that the term "ideology" has itself become thoroughly ideologised" (Apter 1964: 47). This is as true of sociological and epistomological analyses of ideology as it is of the connotations which ideology has acquired in the world of political and party-political debate. In the former area, "ideological thought" has often been used to denote not only subjectivism, but also bias and distortion. As Geertz again puts it, "That the conception of ideology now regnant in the social sciences is a thoroughly evaluative (that is, perjorative) one is readily enough demonstrated" (49). This claim is backed with several examples. Werner Stark, for instance, considers "ideological thought....something shady, something that ought to be overcome and banished from our mind", (1958: 48)

and Talcott Parsons is quoted as saying "The problem of ideology arises where there is a discrepancy between what is believed and what can be [established as] scientifically correct" (1959: 38).

This taint clearly carries over into the arena of political opinion also. Here, ideology is conceived as applying to a particular brand or category of political doctrines which are seen as overly rigid, restrictive and somehow artificial. This is the implication in V.J.Narasimhan's remark "I doubt whether the term ideology could be applied to such natural aspirations as industrialisation, modernisation or even nationalism" (1965: 21). Clearly, the Gandhian philosophy is not considered to amount to an ideology either, for, in the course of arguing for a new adherence to the trusteeship formula, Narasimhan goes on to comment; "We must shift our thinking from ideology to ethics" (25).

It turns out that what are considered as constituting ideologies in this brand of attack, are the archetypal cases of Communism, Nazism and perhaps Nationalism. This is what Geerts describes as " Shils's tack of invoking the extreme pathologies of ideological thought - Nazism, Bolshevism, or whatever - as its paradigmatic forms" (Apter

1964: 52). (It might be noted in passing that "pathologies" itself is a somewhat loaded term). A similar line of thought is pursued by Daniel Bell in the course of his argument that what we are seeing in the West today is the "end of ideology". This is held to be demonstrated by the fact that "amongst the intellectuals, the old passions are spent", and "few serious minds believe any longer that one can set down 'blue-prints' and through 'social engineering' bring about a new utopia of social harmony". Where such passionate commitment to total solutions is missing, ideology is necessarily absent. Where there is an unemotional consensus over "the acceptance of the Welfare State, the desirability of decentralised power, a system of mixed economy and of political pluralism", it is clear that there "the ideological age has ended" (1960: 373-4).

If the term ideology is thus restricted to all-embracing and manifest doctrines, then the debate about the ubiquity or otherwise of ideology can hardly be a real one. It seems more useful to accept Apter's comparatively neutral definition of ideology as "a generic term applied to general ideas potent in specific situations of conduct; for example, not <u>any</u> ideals, only political ones; not <u>any</u> values, only those specifying a given set of preferences; not <u>any</u> beliefs, only

those governing particular modes of thought" (1964: 17) and further to agree with him that the term can be extensively applied, and as validly to Western democracies as to Communist states. The difference may be that "In the Western world, ideology has changed considerably from the more dogmatic statements that periodically in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, heralded total solutions to world problems. Today our ideologies are disguised." Other taxonomies of ideological types can of course be devised. Ginsberg, for instance, suggests that "We have to distinguish between 'open' and 'closed' ideologies", the distinguishing marks of the former being that "they are often criticised from within and that they also learn from each other" (1963: 418). No doubt such categories can be further elaborated or contested. The point is that they attempt to identify species of ideology, rather than to distinguish between its existence and non-existence.

If such a stance is taken, then the values informing particular policies need not be identifiable with one of the archetypal doctrines in order to be classed as ideological. In the Indian context, it is not only the major ideological themes of nationalism and socialism which are of interest, though these may tend to dominate the scene. Less extreme

and less clearly defined sets of values may also be influential. It may well be the case, in fact, that the archetypal cases are not in any case as distinct and homogeneous as might be assumed, and that they are really more like whole constellations of minor ideologies, than single entities.

The various approaches to ideology. So much then for the range of application of the term ideology. The second task is to look at some distinct sociological approaches which either set out to examine the process of ideology-formation directly, or which seek to include ideology as an active ingredient in broader political processes. Such theories may indeed contain assumptions about the epistomological status of ideology, but the important point is that they also examine its social role. Marxian theory, for example, contributed substantially to the concept of ideology as "false consciousness", but it also laid the foundations for the social structural interpretation of ideology as related to the distribution of economic and political power, and the two levels of analysis do not seem to be irrevocably connected or to face the same problems. The relating of going ideologies to identifiable economic structures and situations, for example, may or may not entail an acceptance

of relativeism, but it does not necessarily run up against the difficulty of defining a state of "true" consciousness by relying on notions of real or latent interest.[3] It does encounter other difficulties of course, such as that of specifying the mechanism, psychological or otherwise, by which the economic structure gives rise to, or selects a given ideology. This is a problem which has been referred to for instance by Birnbaum.[4]

At the level of social or contextual analysis of ideology, at least four broad directions or types of approach can be identified. These may be characterised as the "psychological", the "interest", the "input-output", and the "range-of-possibility" approaches. These four are not necessarily either strictly comparable or mutually exclusive. The last two, for example, both rely on a framework which may loosely be called systems analysis and which takes a very broad perspective. The first two, on the other hand, take much more specific points of reference, such as the individual psyche, or the social stratum or class. The various approaches are distinguished most clearly by their particular starting points and perspectives.

1. The psychological approach. At its purest, the psychological approach is concerned only with the relation

between individual psyche and espoused ideology. This relation may be argued in either behavioural or psycho-analytic terms. In the former case, the process described is a relatively non-teleological one. Eysenck, for example, maintains that "We have to learn our politics as we learn our language, and if we wish to know anything about political attitudes, then we should be able to turn to the laws of learning...We might call these laws the law of hedonism and the law of association" (1957: 271).

Briefly, it is first maintained that the right-left continuum of attitudes is produced by the association of a piece of behaviour with ensuing gratification, the assumption being that in Britain voting Labour materially rewards the low-class or low-status man. There is also a cross-cutting tough-minded - tender-minded continuum of attitudes, however, and this correlates with the degree of "conditionability" in the individual, which will determine his state as relatively over- or under-socialised. These states manifest themselves, in the one case as "a tender-minded regard for conventions and rules protecting society from the more biological drives of human nature" and, in the other case, as "a tough minded desire to over-ride these conventions and seek direct expression of these animal instincts" (280). It is argued

that the laws of learning give rise to opinions, opinions cluster in attitudes, and an analysis of the relationships between attitudes brings us to "a higher-order construct yet, namely, that of ideology" (286).

The psycho-analytical approach to ideology, as opposed to the behavioural, has a somewhat different theoretical base, but again the starting point is the individual psyche, even if more in terms of its "needs" than of its ability to acquire conditioned reflexes. The object is broadly to establish a plausible connection between the tensions within and personality system and the cognitive and affectual security or outlet afforded by the particular world view espoused. Erikson, for instance, in a study of Martin Luther, (subtitled "a study in psychoanalysis and history") defines ideology as "an unconscious tendency underlying religious and scientific as well as political thought; the tendency at a given time to make facts amenable to ideas and ideas to facts, in order to create a world image convincing enough to support the collective and individual sense of identity" (1962: 22).

At first sight, it would seem that these psychological approaches, rooted as they are in the individual, can have little to say about the social role of ideology. Consideration

of the individual psyche's needs or dispositions may suggest something about the mechanism of the individual's attachment to a going ideology, but it can say less about the active role of ideological factors in political situations. In any case, it naturally raises larger questions which a purely psychological approach can only begin to answer, about why individuals are or become psychologically disposed or susceptible in these specific ways. If the individual psyche is not an autonomous unit, one is led to enquire into the ways in which its needs may be socially structured.

This aspect of ideology can be met by a social psychological approach, and Erikson is perhaps more than half way to such a standpoint when he remarks that "In some periods of history....man needs....a new ideological orientation as surely and as sorely as he must have air and food" (22). But what is tantamount merely to background for Erikson becomes a vital dimension for those who interpret ideology as the patterned response to a specific social situation. The "strain" may then be seen as originating in the structure of society and manifesting itself only secondarily through individual psychological mechanisms. Geertz says of this kind of approach, "the clear and distinct idea from which strain theory departs is the chronic

malintegration of society" (Apter 1964: 54).

But Geertz himself is concerned to argue that most so-called strain theories have neglected the role of ideology as a manipulator of symbols. It is this which gives it its status as "a cultural system" and one which is most readily and manifestly[5] resorted to in time of rapid change, when the individual is overwhelmed by "a loss of orientation" and "an inability, for lack of usable models, to comprehend the universe of civic rights and responsibilities" (64). Thus, "whatever else ideologies may be...they are most distinctively, maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of collective conscience." Yet the map so presented is not to be taken or left as the individual wills, for it is also the case that "ideology names the structure of situations in such a way that the attitude contained towards them is one of commitment" (71).

2. The interest approach. The above approach then is one step nearer to analysing the specifically social determinants or stimulants of ideology. A second type of approach, which tackles such determinants directly, is the interest or power approach, typified by the Marxian view of ideology as a part of the social superstructure, dependent on the material base in the same manner as the more concrete institutions of

the political system and legal and judicial code.[6] The motivational or psychological link in this process of determination between material base and expressed ideology tends not to be elaborated in the traditional Marxian line of argument; hence the accusation that "its psychology is too anaemic and its sociology too muscular" (Apter 1964: 53).

The Marxian approach is not of course the only example of this power perspective. It puts forward a specific theory of the relationship between ideology and the power structure, which will be examined more closely below. Other theories have suggested variables other than economic position as the major determinants of the allocation of power and thus as the most important reference points for the content of ideological thought. Weber's concept of the social group or class is a case in point. Sometimes Weber tends to insist on the autonomy of religious ideas even though in "The Protestant Ethic" he protests that he has no intention of substituting a religious for an economic determinism and even though his major concern is clearly with the process of selection which operates between social position and religious outlook. Yet elsewhere he is ambivalent about the relationship which can be said to link social groups and their religious outlook.[7] Hinduism,

for instance, he describes as the religion of a hereditary caste of ritualistic literati who are the custodians of the sacred doctrine informing the caste hierarchy.[8] Indeed, Carlo Antoni suggests that, "If Weber did not insist on the autonomy of mystical experience, his sociology would differ from materialism only by its substitution of social class for economic class" (1959: 166).

3. The input-output approach. In rather marked contrast to the interest or power analysis of ideology, are the various species of functionalist or system theory. The whole perspective here is quite different. Instead of taking as the initial assumption the conviction that the segmentation of society into classes or strata is fundamental and in some sense primary to an appreciation of the role of ideology, functional theory takes as its perspective an overall view of society as a system and attempts to devise a model which will most adequately account for the mechanisms of social interaction. Each element is viewed as a component part, the linking mechanism being explained in terms of some analogous model or process such as input-output flows or cybernetic information passage and feed-back. The social system is thus envisaged as a set of variously flexible constraints, capable of degrees of accommodation.

The case of a fast-developing society is a much-considered one since it is here that rates of change are liable to produce the "strains" or "crises" most interesting in the context of an assumed normal state of integration. Ideology is seen as capable of performing certain functions which contribute to the total process. Easton, for instance, sees ideology partly as a potential conveyor of demands from as it were, political consumers to political producers. Hence, ideology generally fulfils its main function on the input side of the model. Easton suggests that "Regardless of the scope and general context of belief systems, they may be classified according to their demand content" (1965: 43), and, further, that "the demands flowing into a system constitute one of the major sources of stress acting on its essential variables" (37).

4. The range-of-possibility approach. A fourth approach is that of Apter. It must be said at the outset that Apter himself clearly distinguishes between what he refers to as political norms or values, and political ideologies, the latter being an off-shoot of the former. "Ideology" it is explained, "can be defined as the explicit and derivative articulation of political norms" (1965: 270). Although the two categories seem to be closely linked in this definition,

Apter's treatment of them is in fact quite different. In considering a society's "political morality" or "normative principles", for instance, he deals with the broadest possible themes such as liberty, equality, democracy and totalitarianism or collectivism, but in dealing with ideology, the four themes selected are nationalism, socialism, fascism and science. In dealing with these manifest ideologies, the approach seems to be a mainly functional one. It is maintained that "what gives an ideology its real force and conviction during its period of maximum effectiveness, is its contribution to establishing identity and solidarity" (1964: 328). Whether the fulfilment of such functions is to be related to psychological needs, or to the"needs" of the political system must be investigated later. It would seem most interesting here to look at Apter's treatment of the wider political values of a society as well as what he specifically defines as ideology.

Apter's main task is to analyse the "politics of modernisation". The alternative to a Marxian analysis he sees as what he calls a probabilistic study, uniting normative, structural, and behavioural theory. But the approach, it seems, is again basically a structural and functional one. The various types of system distinguished

are assessed for their potential adequacy in dealing with the task of modernisation. As Apter himself says, other types of analysis may address themselves to the question of which choices are made by groups or individuals and why, whereas structural analysis concerns itself with what choices are possible.

For Apter, the range of possible choices seems to be a function of the authority-type of the particular system. But the type of authority, or the principle of legitimation, is itself seen as an outcome of choices made on value premises. As Apter puts it, "Politics is peculiar insofar as principles of legitimation are normative first, and structural second" (1965: 16). Thus, normative principles, such as "liberty" or "potentiality" "become principles of legitimation" and these give rise to generalised models of polity. These are essentially distinguished by their values and purposes, for "the two different normative models aim at quite different moral ends. The secular-libertarian model essentially accepts society as it is and suggests a framework that will allow modest change over time....the sacred-collectivity model is opposed to conditions as they are" (33-34).

The total implication, therefore, is that the norms and values of a polity are in some sense primary, but they have structural implications because of the types of authority to which they give rise and the means through which authority is expressed. In effect, then, the basic political norms set constraints on the range of policy possibilities. There is in Apter's analysis also a notion of the evolutionary development of sets of political values and systems. Because the sheer dimensions of organisational and administrative capacity required for modernisation will probably prove to be uneasily afforded within certain types of system, and because the need to establish authority effectively will initially take precedence over the desire for equity or a diffused distribution of power, it is assumed that a "collective" policy may be a precondition for a "liberal" one, as far as the individual society is concerned. The range of normative possibility is thus seen as being dependent on the stage of development of the process of modernisation with which the system is coping. Ideology, in other words, may be a constraint on the immediate situation, but is itself a function of the overall stage of development. In concrete terms, the implication is that fully-fledged democracies cannot be expected to emerge in

developing and modernising states.

Levels of difference between the theories.

It is clear that these four treatments of ideology differ considerably, not only in their general perspective, but in their theoretical assumptions also. The aim in this context is to discover what light any or all of them may shed on the relationship between ideology and policy formation, and for this purpose, the most important aspects of the various approaches are the substantive statements they make about ideology and its role. But it is as well to clarify first the level of explanation at which each operates before considering their concrete conclusions and whether they are mutually exclusive or reconcilable.

Each approach manifests, first, a particular stance or perspective vis à vis ideology as a variable. It may, for instance, seek to outline the determinants of ideology, or it may be more concerned with its wider effects, or even with the interhal structure and "syntax" of ideologies themselves. Secondly, this perspective is likely either to rest on or to imply a particular kind of theoretical framework, as, for example, the Marxian direction of analysis from material base to ideological super-structure, assumes the existence of some kind of causal relationship, and,

moreover, the vaility of attempting to identify such a relationship.

Directions of analysis and theoretical foundations. From the point of view of perspective or direction, the four approaches here mentioned fall roughly into two camps. Both the psychological and the interest approaches look behind or beneath ideology to its determinants or preconditions, in the one case psychological and in the other, social and structural. In this respect, social psychological theories of ideology are intermediate, since the immediate influence on ideology is seen as being the individual psychological state, but this in turn is seen as produced by a given state of society. But in all three cases, the body of ideas which constitute a given ideology is conceived as, in some sense, answering to the prior state of individuals or groups, and this prior state may in some cases actually be given the status of a causal factor.

The last two treatments of ideology here discussed, however, are much less specific in direction of analysis. Both Easton and Apter argue within the general framework of structural-functional analysis. Consequently, their perspective is a higher-level and a more multi-directional one. Insofar as there is a direction of explanation, it

tends to be from the phenomenon to its consequences or effects. Again the particular perspective is firmly tied up with the theoretical base on which the argument rests. The analysis is in terms of interaction between variables, and changes in the overall state of the system. As far as any one variable is concerned, there are two kinds of performance described. First, a variable may at any given time be fulfiling a function which contributes to the maintenance of the whole system. Ideology, for instance, may express and channel demands, and so effect communication between governed and governing. This process is assumed to be quite distinct from, and even independent of, the causal factors which actually provoke and shape the variable concerned. Because of this, and because the mechanisms which sustain the process remain obscure, this kind of explanation remains somewhat problematic. As Geertz puts it, "A pattern of behaviour shaped by a certain set of forces turns out, by a plausible but nevertheless mysterious coincidence, to serve ends but tenuously related to those forces" (Apter 1964: 55).

The second kind of performance described is that in which the variable reacts as part of a sequence of change, induced, it is usually assumed, by some exogenous force.

The main weight of Apter's analysis, for instance, is directed towards allowing for the major impetus to change represented by modernisation. In response to such an impetus, either the variables accommodate, and so jointly manifest smooth progress towards a new overall equilibrium or a continuing state of stability, or else there is a failure of adjustment, caused by a too-rigid structural constraint. In this case there is a build-up of strain or pressure which is followed, according to the terminology employed, either by a breakdown of the system, or by a push towards a completely new state of the system. In Easton's model, ideology might be described as the barometer in such a situation, in that it registers the build-up of pressure on the mechanisms of distribution through the intensity of its demand-content.

The adequacy of functional analysis continues, of course, to be debated. Its advocates argue that it has clear advantages over other approaches. What have here been called interest or power structure theories, Easton labels as "allocative theories", since they are mainly concerned with "the way in which the political pie is cut up and how it happens to get cut up in one way rather than another" (1965: 475). He finds their major flaw in the fact that

"there is a status quo bias built into allocative research." He believes that a systems analysis, on the other hand, proves to have a more comprehensive explanatory power, because "where the system itself is threatened with destruction, as in highly unstable systems, allocative theories, although relevant no longer suffice. We need to turn to the basic forces - here described as stress - if we are to understand the processes through which political systems are able to fulfil their characteristic task, that of allocating values authoritatively for a society." This is perhaps a little ironical as precisely the same accusation, that of being biased in favour of the status quo and of being ill-equipped to explain social change, has often been levelled at functional theory.[9] Further, it can hardly be argued that interest theory, and the Marxian one in particular, is not capable of yielding a theory of social change.

What is certain about functional analysis is the extent of its usage. It operates over a range of levels, and often overlaps with other kinds of explanation. Psychological theory, for instance, though sometimes appearing as a species of causal explanation, readily furnishes functional explanations also. Here, the language of cause, explanation and function is particularly difficult to segregate out,

since human behaviour is in any case acceptably described as purposive or teleological. It seems plausible to maintain, as Apter does for instance, that ideologies contribute to the establishing and maintenance of solidarity and identity, if the reference is to the functional needs of individuals rather than those of political systems. The difficulty arises in applying functional concepts to the performance of abstractions, such as institutions, and to unpurposed entities such as the "goals" of a system.

Nevertheless, functional language at this level does seem to be concerned with factors and relationships which cannot be ignored. The main difficulty may perhaps be avoided by using the term function strictly in the sense of consequences. Thus the expression of demands may be understood as an effect or consequence, either intended or unintended, of the nature of a given ideology, rather than as one of its functions in an organic sense. Similarly, as far as society or "the system" is concerned, the promotion of solidarity or the maintenance of a collective identity, may be regarded either as the purpose of deliberately sponsored ideologies, or as the unintended consequences of more spontaneous ideologies.[10] It would be regrettable if such aspects of the social role of ideology had to be

excluded, and only its determinants or moulding influences examined... This would be particularly so in the context of the relation between ideology and policy formation.

Substantive conclusions of the various approaches. If the four approaches are examined in terms of their substantive comments about the nature, causes and effect of ideology, rather than in terms of their theoretical assumptions, they may be seen as dividing along somewhat different lines. Both the social psychological approach, as represented by Geertz and by a part of Apter's systems analysis, direct attention to the situational conducements for the emergence of ideology, whether as general phenomenon or as particular specified doctrine. The need for "maps of problematic social reality" will obviously be greatest when social reality is felt to be at its most problematic. The predisposing factors therefore, are political instability and conditions of rapid change. Nowadays the situation is ripe for the expansion of ideological currency because "for the most part, the new states are still groping for usable political concepts, and not yet grasping them" (Apter 1964: 65).

Easton's model and the interest approach, on the other hand, although they have quite different starting points, both direct attention not so much to the broader situational

preconditions for the emergence of ideology, but to the way in which ideology relates to and effects the power structure, and in particular, the government-governed power axis. Marxist theory, for instance, is most concerned with ideology as a rationalisation of the position of the ruling class and therefore as a virtual extension of the power of the politically and economically dominant.[11] Ideology is an instrument for the extension and maintenance of power. Easton, by contrast, is principally concerned with the demand content of ideology, and hence with the possibility of its limiting the initiative of the government. The analysis is explicitly not made in terms of power, but there is clearly an underlying power dimension present. The strength and effectiveness of the demands must surely be a function of the relative strength of those who do the demanding and of those who are at the receiving end of the demands.

It must be noted that neither the Marxist nor Easton's theory is as one-sided as is here implied.[12] Both, in fact, consider the converse effects of ideology. For example, Lenin in particular did not see ideology only as a "mystifying" force. In particular circumstances, true consciousness does arise and the real interests of the proletariat,

constitute ideology in its scientific sense. Such ideology does constitute a threat to the established ruling class. But Marx of course saw this as an essentially unstable situation, which could only issue in conflict and revolution. He did not foresee the possibility of on-going "sub-cultures" and encapsulated ideologies becoming permanently embedded in the structure of the policy, or the possibility of compromise and adjustment between governing and governed, as represented, for instance, by the evolution of the Welfare State. It was left to later pressure group theories to elaborate these possibilities.

Similarly, Easton does not identify ideology solely or completely with the input side of his model. He recognises that it may also function for the legitimation of the current regime, and for the perpetuation of the political community. But he does nevertheless underemphasise the possibility that the "official" ideology may actually mould the demands of the governed. Apter too, in his treatment of the connection between ideology and government stresses the legitimising aspects of ideology, "Government policy", he says,"affects consummatory rather than instrumental values through the manipualation of ideology. Ideological'policy' is thus related to the contingent functions of government in its

symbolic, sanctional, integrational and definitional aspects" (1965: 313). But there is little detail here of the way in which the going ideology may actually influence concrete wants and demands. Thus the interest or power approach and the systems type of analysis may well be complementary. The two-way aspect of ideology as it operates between government and governed is a vital dimension and directs attention to the balance operating within the power structure of society.

Finally, and apart from the situational-conducement, and the power-balance types of observations about ideology, there is a third kind of statement. This arises in the part of Apter's model which deals with political norms as sets of situational constraints on the range of options available to the political system. It will be interesting to consider whether values or ideology may in fact be considered as primary constraints in this way.

Implications for the ideology-policy relationship.

What light can these various treatments of ideology shed on the relationship between ideology and policy formation? What framework do they suggest for analysing the development of particular policies, such as the Indian

land reform and agrarian ones, and for understanding the attitudes which are provoked by these policies and by the process of their implementation?

The kind of approach which focuses on the situational conducements and preconditions for ideology, whether functionalist or otherwise, tends to treat ideology as the end-product of the analysis and is little concerned with the relation between it and concrete policy. Ideology is dealt with as a self-contained cognitive or symbolic system. For Geertz, ideologies appear as "matrices for the creation of collective conscience", the preconditions being social disruption or uncertainty. In the narrow and specific sense in which Apter uses the term, ideology is similarly seen as "a specific case of political religion" (1965: 270), its distinguishing characteristics being its capacity to promote a sense of solidarity and identity.

If taken as guide-lines, these particular points would seem to suggest that the Indian case should first be approached in terms of the historical emergence of the main ideological currents themselves, and that these should be considered as bodies of sentiments fulfilling social psychological functions. The implications of this approach for the relationship between ideology and the formation of

policy may seem somewhat tenuous. It remains to be seen whether such theories do yield conclusions about this relationship.

The second group of approaches, on the other hand, focus attention onto ideology as related to the power-axis which exists between government and the nation at large. From this point of view the Indian case, and indeed that of the new states in general, is a particularly interesting one, since the governed have actually been transformed into the governing by a fairly rapid transition. This suggests that the developing role of Congress must be considered a vital factor, with Independence as an important divide. Ideology may be considered either as a set of demands, related to identifiable groups or interests within society and directed towards the governing, or as a justificatory and instrumental weapon in the hands of the politically-dominant, and therefore directed towards the governed. Whether such "demands" or "justifications" are to be related to economic or group interest, or whether they are to be seen in terms of the interaction of parts of the political system, is a question which cannot be answered in advance.

The final approach is that deriving from Apter's general analysis. In his treatment of the broader political values,

of which ideology is seen as an explicit form, Apter gives the impression that he is dealing with a set of constraints and institutionalised priorities, rather than a series of sentiments. It may well be that this level of values, or of "latent" ideology is an important consideration for the analysis of policy formation, and it suggests that the ideological patterns discerned should be considered for the ways in which they may have set limits to the range of policy possibilities. In this process, the degrees of internal ideological consistency, or possibly of conflict, may be an important factor.

Framework of analysis. These various approaches and their implications would seem to suggest two different sets of critiera for analysing the Indian case: first, a series of ideological themes, and secondly, the phases of Congress development over time. These general frameworks would seem to be partially congruent and partially cross-cutting. It cannot be assumed that analysis in terms of the continuities and shifts in the content of ideological themes will necessarily coincide with the outlines of Congress development. On the other hand, it is clearly impossible to devise two such series of categories which are independent of one another. The emergence of ideological themes cannot have been unaffected

by the growth of Congress. Similarly, it may well be the case that shifts in ideological gear are part of what actually helps to define changes in Congress's role. The aim then is to find a series of phases and areas which will accommodate topics concerned with both themes, and allow their inter-relations to emerge.

As far as Congress is concerned, it would seem reasonable to take Independence as the initial and major divide, and then to distinguish other phases or sub-divisions within the larger periods. The process of specifying and isolating ideological themes, however, is one which as suggested above, is fraught with difficulty. It involves a process of abstraction in two senses; first because at any given time, a cross-section of a society's political opinion will reveal a whole diversity of constellations of view-points. Ideal-types may be constructed, such as "the radical position", "The social democratic", "the conservative" or "the reactionary" attitude, but the many groups and individuals, or social units of whatever kind, will hold such positions with their own reservations and interpretations, which may add up to a mixture of ingredients from the various ideal-types. Secondly, even apart from the range of constellations of ideological

position, there remains the difficulty of attaching political labels. The observer's schema may entail assigning the political positions encountered to categories other than the exponents themselves would acknowledge.

To some extent this kind of imposition and interpretation from outside is inevitable. But there is a case, at least initially, for concentrating on the broadest possible ideological themes which themselves have been umbrellas for diverse opinion, rather than the alternative method of trying immediately to identify ideological positions in terms of particular groups and grading them along a continuum of some kind. By taking the large themes, one can rather see how they themselves have operated as arenas for debate, with different political groups being pushed in and out of the limelight over time. This would seem the more fruitful background for exploring how given policies have emerged, and for examining how ideology and policy have been mutually related.

The three ideological themes which suggest themselves in the Indian context are those of nationalism, socialism-planning, and Gandhism-populism-democracy. Necessarily these are stereotypes; vague, all-inclusive and overlapping, and for these reasons, often seemingly meaningless. But

precisely because they have meant many things to many people they are not unsuitable for the purpose.

Plan of the thesis.

From the point of view of chapter content, it would seem easiest, for the period before Independence, to allow these ideological themes to dictate the divisions, but after Independence, to allow the chronological sequence of Congress development and activity to take over. This is partly because the ideological themes seem more separable before Independence but also because the sequence of phases and events becomes particularly important after Independence when the task was that of formulating and implementing policy in the immediate situation in contrast to the more gradual gestation process which characterised the formation of policy intentions before Independence.

Chapter 2 will therefore be concerned with the theme of nationalism in the pre-Independence setting, and Chapter 3 with socialism and Gandhism over the same period. These two chapters will thus cover both the pre-Gandhian and the Gandhian phases of Congress development. Chapters 4 and 5 will then deal with the phases into which government activity can be seen as falling after Independence; Chapter 4 with

the immediate post-Independence period, and Chapter 5 with the 2nd Five-Year Plan period and with the subsequent developments of the 1960's. These two chapters will thus cover the inter-relations of ideological themes within specific time periods.

Chapter 6 represents something of a deviation, in that it attempts to draw the analysis down from the generalness of the all-India level to the setting of a particular state, but at the same time to see whether there are parallels to be found between the two levels.

In sum, then, the purpose of taking this panoramic view of both the development of Congress and the development of ideology in India, is specifically to try and discover what the relationships between ideology and policy-formation have been. In the process, the fruitfulness of the various sociological approaches to ideology for this particular kind of analysis, may be further considered, as also the ways in which they may be either mutually conflicting or complementary.

Notes. Chapter I

1. The P.E.O. was established in October 1952, "to assess the progress of the community projects and of other intensive development schemes in the rural areas" (Hanson 1966: 63). But its reports on community development in the mid-1950's, which suggested that "results were incommensurate with effort and expenditure (64, and see Chapter 5 below) made it unpopular with the Ministry and the Development Commissioners. Consequently, "the P.E.O. has ceased to publish annual evaluation reports or indeed surveys of any kind. Instead, it now selects a few of the important plan programmes for rural development for intensive and comprehensive study" (64).

2. This is of course a large and loose category, which covers a complex of related measures, from land reform to community development, the National Extension Service and the re-establishment of panchayats or village councils.

3. The problem of "true consciousness" has of course been a perenhial problem, and not only in Marx, because the alternative of total relativism has seemed unacceptable. It gives rise to what Geertz has called "Mannheim's paradox". The paradox is that of trying to establish a point of valid or real objectivity, from which to appraise the subjective or relative.

4. Birnbaum (BJS 1953) suggests that Marx oversimplified the relation between base and superstructure, and did not elaborate the process by which ideologies come to be describable as reflections of class position. There is room here, he argues, for a psychological wedge. The institutions of capitalism and, in Weber's phrase, "the spirit of capitalism", for instance, did not develop from feudalism in "any mechanistic sense, but demanded a specific set of values and specific psychological qualities" (140).

5. It seems that Geertz identifies ideology with a manifest or conscious espousal of certain doctrines. In stable traditional situations, men are rather guided by "untaught feelings" and"unexamined prejudices" (Apter 1964: 63).

6. In "The German Ideology", Marx and Engels write: "We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence...life is not determined by consciousness,

but consciousness by life" (1938: 14-15).

7. In "The Social Psychology of the World Religions", Weber's ambivalence is clear. On the one hand, he says firmly "However incisive the social influences, economically and politically determined, may have been on a religious ethic in a particular case, it receives its stamp primarily from religious sources," However, although he goes on to say "other spheres of interest could have only a secondary influence", he qualifies this by remarking that "often, however, such influence is very obvious and sometimes it is decisive" (Gerth and Mills 1948: 270).

8. Weber writes: "Earlier Hinduism was borne by a hereditary caste of cultured Literati, who being remote from any office, functioned as a kind of ritualist and spiritual advisers for individuals and communities. They formed a stable centre for the orientation of the status stratification, and they placed their stamp upon the social order. Only Brahmans, educated in the Veda, formed, as bearers of tradition, the fully recognised religious status group (Gerth and Mills, ed. 1948: 268-9).

9. See, for instance, R. Dahrendorf (1958) and D. Lockwood (1956). Admittedly both of these attacks are directed mainly at Talcott Parsons and the extreme case of equilibrium

analysis. But Dahrendorf refers, more widely, to "the sense of complacency with - if not justification of - the status quo, which, by intention or default, pervades the structural - functional school of thought" (122).

10. Apter applies the language of function in a social and in an individual sense. Thus he says "I am inclined to the view that ideology helps to perform two main functions: one directly social, binding the community together, and the other individual, organising the role personalities of the maturing individual" (1964: 18). It later becomes clear, however, that in the social functional usage, Apter is at least partly referring to the deliberate and purposive sponsoring of ideology by governments or leaders.

11. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e. the class, which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production" (Marx and Engels 1938: 39).

12. This is particularly clear in the case of Easton. Indeed, he locates the dynamic nature of his whole approach in the fact that he recognises how, within the input-output systems model of politics, "the outputs of the conversion

process have the characteristics of feeding back upon the system and shaping its subsequent behaviour'" (31). The implication is that the demands of the system are themselves at least partly conditioned by the nature and influence of government. Furthermore, he later argues that "By encouraging members to adopt the principles, purposes and assumptions of of an ideology as the premises of their behaviour, a leadership may be successful in capturing the energies of the members for specified policy objectives that they, the leadership, may consider desirable or necessary" (340). This is relevant also to the problem of mobilisation, which is dealt with in Chapter 5 below.

CHAPTER 2.

Nationalism and Congress policy before Independence

Nationalism and theories of ideology.

It was suggested above that the topic of ideology and policy-formation should be approached on the one hand from the point of view of the ideologies themselves and their emergence, and, on the other hand, from the standpoint of Congress and its phases of development. There will then be scope for considering how well theories about ideology as situationally-conduced, or as situationally constraining, mesh with theories which relate ideology rather to the balance of power and the role of government. This being so, there is a good case for starting with a study of nationalism, since this is clearly a segment of ideology which is intimately and almost necessarily, related to the course of Congress development. Indeed, analysing the fabric of nationalism means not only describing Congress's evolution, but also enquiring into the very nature of Congress as a movement.

However, nationalism, like ideology itself, is analysable at many levels, and has accordingly often been considered

in ways other than in relation to particular political movements. Certainly the main aim here is to consider how nationalism, as a species of ideology, may be related to the changes in the power structure which the growth of Congress effected, but the various other kinds of interpretations of nationalism must also be taken into account. In general, there is the same three-fold classification as was applied to statements about ideology at large; namely, observations dealing with, respectively, situational conducements, the relevance of the balance of power between government and governing, and finally, implications for the range of choices open to a system. The ways in which such types of theories deal specifically with nationalism must be considered, so that their conclusions or suggestions may be measured against the Indian case.

The situational conducements approach. The situational conducements category, as with theories of ideology in general, is made up mainly of theories concerned with social, or individual, psychological predispositions and needs, with the states of society which are productive or permissive of these, and with the functions of ideology in catering to such states. This focuses attention onto nationalism as a sentiment, and onto the mechanisms of attachment of individuals to particular bodies of ideas. Apter's treatment

of nationalism, which he accepts as one of four identified "ideological tendences" (1965: 317) illustrates this well. His general approach, as pointed out above, seems to combine notions of functionality for the system, with a stress on the social psychological "needs" of individuals. Like other forms of ideology, nationalism is seen as providing both a buttressing sense of identity, and a uniting sense of solidarity. The identity function is fulfilled either through a sense of continuity or through a new sense of belonging, for "nationalism either preserves an identity that is carried over from the traditions of the past or creates a new set of attachments centering on the modern state" (330). Solidarity is provided by the all-encompassing nature of this sense of identity. "Nationalism incorporates primordial loyalties in a readily understandable synthesis ... Diffuse enough to encompass all specific forms of loyalty and tradition, it elevates them to a national inheritance. The value of nationalism lies in its functional flexibility" (331). The question which naturally arises from these statements is that of whether or not Indian nationalism is, in fact, most adequately characterised in terms of its identity-creating and solidarity-producing effects.

The power-balance approach. The second category of substantive statements about ideology was labelled as the

power-axis or government-governing one. This is the diverse grouping which includes both Marx and Easton, not because their theoretical assumptions are similar, which they are not, but because they both direct attention to the power structure context of ideology. In the case of Easton's approach, the suggestion that nationalism must be seen as a set of demands acting on the allocative and power-regulating mechanisms of society would seem a fairly plausible one, especially when the early history of Congress is examined. The difficulty is, however, that the very language of systems analysis evades the problem of the precise origin and sponsorship of the demands.[1] As a connective mechanism in the system, it is enough that they travel from one point to another, and that they may be the manifester of "strain" or "tension". But the query inevitably arises, and particularly in the Indian context, and in view of the previous theory's predominant stress on the unifying nature of ideology, as to how specific or how broad is the base from which these demands originate.

It is here that the other half of this power-axis category of theories, the Marxian or interest line of analysis, is relevant, because more specific and therefore more suggestive. In fact, Marx hardly confronted the specific problem of nationalism, but, applying the general

principles which were held by Marx or, subsequently, by Lenin, to explain ideology, nationalism in the Indian context would be open to two interpretations. Either it represented the interests of a class other than the proletariat, in which case the ideology must have a "mystifying" aspect, or else id did represent proletarian interests, in which case it was a truly revolutionary force. In the former case, if the class interest was a bourgeois one, then this might constitute the challenging of an essentially feudal regime by a pre-socialist revolution, but the ideology would clearly correspond to the sectional or class interest of the bourgeoisie alone.

In fact, of course, Marxist theory has had difficulty in accommodating nationalism and nationalist movements within the confines of its traditional concepts.[2] It is of particular interest to discover how adequately an interest theory can deal with the case of Indian nationalism.

The range-of-possibility approach. The third category of approaches to nationalism is the range-of-possibilities one. Here the intention would be to describe how nationalism as a set of operative values sets constraints on the policy-options available to a given society. In Apter's model, the "normative elements" which characterise political systems, or stages of development of these systems, are the

multi-faceted ones of collectivism and liberalism, but similar surmises can be made about the ways in which nationalism as entrenched ideology might be held to set constraints on political action.

The most obvious case of this is the way in which nationalism may appear to delineate the operative or "felt" political unit. Secession and partition, or, in the reverse direction, federation and "pan" movements, may equally be inspired by nationalism of a kind. This leads to speculation about the way in which such nationalistic boundaries may in fact be correlated with other, and perhaps prior, sets of constraints. This is the line of enquiry pursued, for example, by Gellner (1946) who concludes that the operative unit is a cultural-administrative one.

Nationalism as a setter of constraints in this sense, is certainly an important topic. But it is not clear that in the Indian case it is one which has any immediate bearing on the emergence of agrarian policy. In some cases, it is perhaps arguable that religious cleavage reinforced landlord-tenant conflicts and divisions, and so exacerbated anti-zamindar feeling.[3] But, although regional and communal divisions have become increasingly important in post-Independence India, and so have almost begun to threaten the viability of national unity and the possibility of imple-

menting national policies, their influence on the evolution of domestic policy before Independence was much more limited. This is an aspect of nationalism, therefore, which will not be pursued in detail here.

One way in which nationalism may well have acted as a delineator of policy-possibilities, however, was in its capacity as an identifier of targets. It may be that the logic of nationalist ideology itself focused attention onto certain aspects of the agrarian structure and so helped to mould future agrarian policy.

The initial task then, is to consider the rival claims for nationalism as a unifying sentiment, or as a set of sectional demands. Are either, or both, of these claims appropriate? Do they necessarily conflict, or are they reconciliable? Secondly, what other aspects of nationalism emerge in this pre-Independence period; did it in fact help to select the issues of debate and the objects of opposition? In general, was it the case that the nature of nationalism and its course of development militated against the emergence, either immediately, or in the long term, of a "really radical" agrarian policy, or could it have acted as a stimulus for this? These various questions must be considered against the concrete background of the growth of the nationalist movement as represented by the Indian National

Congress.

Congress and nationalism in the pre-Gandhian phase.

The development of the Congress before Independence seems to divide naturally into at least two phases, and these are particularly relevant from the point of view of ideology. The dividing line is the appearance of Gandhi as a major influence on Congress at the beginning of the 1920s. It seems convenient to consider the two periods separately, partly because the progression from one to the other clearly marked an extension and enlargement of the nationalist movement, but also because the transitional point and its impetus may themselves be variously interpreted, according to the main line of argument pursued.

How then is this first phase of nationalism and of Congress development, stretching from the 1880's to the early 1920's, to be described? What kind of interpretation might be advanced, first of all, by a social psychological and functional approach?

A social psychological interpretation. It seems appropriate to take Apter's description of nationalism as representative of this view-point, not least because he specifically suggests a series of chronological developments through which ideology may pass in "countries moving from dependent

to independent status." This path is defined partly in terms of a dialectic with other ideological tendencies, and particularly socialism. But this is seen as being more important at a later stage. In the initial stages "the periods of nationalism build up slowly. At first there is emphasis on a common citizenship leading to more effective participation in agencies of rule and greater educational opportunity. Primordial loyalties continue to serve as the basis of the society's uniqueness and to promote pride in identity. The period of nationalism, therefore, accepts the main structure of society as it stands while seeking greater opportunities. It is "radical" only in one political context - colonialism" (1965: 335).

This is worth quoting at length because in some ways, as will appear later, it seems an apt description of the early stages of Indian nationalism. But if it seems satisfactory at the descriptive level, it seems less adequate as an explanation. It is not really clear, for instance, why emergent nationalism accepts the structural status quo. The implication seems to be that this is because the sense of group identity promoted by nationalism directs attention to the cleavage between "natives" and "colonials" or masters, to the exclusion of all else, and the emphasis therefore naturally falls on the need to break the monopoly control

of the latter over the going structures. The main weakness here seems to lie in the description of the demand for greater participation as stemming from a sense of "common citizenship". It is imperative to know quite how common is the sense of citizenship at this stage, and how general is the sentiment. Apter's account can be too easily interpreted as implying that the sentiments of nationalism at successive stages pertain to a homogeneous and constant set of people, or of types of people.

A power-axis interpretation. By contrast, the interest, or power-balance approach concentrates on the content of the ideology and on the nature of the social groups involved. Easton's account of ideology as a set of demands is admittedly too broad a characterisation to do more than imply that there may be sectional interests at work here. But an elite theory or a Marxist account, such as that advanced by A.R. Desai (1966) puts forward a clearly, and perhaps even a crudely, specific explanation of the nature of such interest. According to such a view, the origins of the nationalist movement as embodied in the Indian National Congress, were overwhelmingly upper middle class with elements of the aristocratic. Nationalism received its first definition in terms of elite goals; its initial impetus derived from the eagerness of an educated non-governing professional group to gain

access to the arena of power, to be allowed to participate in the process of administration and government. Moreover, it is argued that this had important long-term effects for it was an urge which died extremely hard, as witness the controvercies which continued right into the 1920's and 1930's over the merits of co-operation as against non-co-operation, participation as against non-participation, and especially the long controversy which engrossed Congress in the 1920's over the merits of taking office in the legislative councils. The prospect of accepting whatever modifications and reforms were offered because they represented a means to sharing in the exercise of power was a constant temptation to those who were qualified, especially when the further justification could be added of wanting to share in government, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the changes which could thereby be implemented.

It is not implied that such men were graspingly eager for self-aggrandisement. On the contrary, men such as Motilal Nehru were deeply committed to the goal of self-government. The point is that the entire outlook and ambitions of such men were geared towards fighting for inclusion in the going process of government and it was difficult for them to reject piecemeal concessions and gradual extensions of participation. Such a tradition left

its legacy, even when the generation which conformed to it most obviously has passed, in that the goal continued to be the taking over of the machinery of government, although the tactical means altered considerably. This was not the sort of heritage which directed attention to a fundamental reorganisation of society. It meant also that the attitude of Congress to the elite and to those who had a vested interest in the establishment, whether these were wealthy businessmen or large landowners, was always ambivalent.

The nature of Congress before 1920. If the concrete origins of Congress are examined, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the latter account is substantially accurate. The foundation of Congress in 1885 was to a large extent the outcome of the spread of English education and the consequent rise of a new educated professional and clerical middle and lower-middle class. Before the 1892 Council Reform Act, the only access for Indians to politics was via Government appointment to the legislative councils. This had inevitably limited such opportunities to the wealthy and influential, to men such as those who belonged to the British India Association. The B.I.A. had been founded in 1851 and was basically an association of wealthy landholders, but included also professional and commercial interests.

Their characteristic concern was the preservation of zamindari rights, even to the extent of opposing Government-sponsored tenancy reforms, such as those included in the Bengal Rent Bill, introduced in 1882, which proposed that occupational and sales rights should accrue to tenants of 12 years' standing. The extent of their influence is revealed by the fact that the bill, as finally passed three years later, was substantially modified.[4] Such men often received preferment; for example, in Bengal between 1862 and 1892, thirty-five members of the B.I.A. were appointed to the Legislative Council (Misra 1961: 344).

But for the newly educated middle class, the doctors, lawyers, teachers, traders and money-lenders, who lacked such considerable resources and influence, these avenues were not open, and the demand for representative institutions was therefore an obvious one, and indeed after the 1892 Councils Act, Congress itself became an avenue of advancement for election to the councils and beyond. The Government in its turn found it useful to appoint moderate Congressmen to official positions such as judgeships, and to award knighthoods, thereby cementing support for the Government. Loyalty to the throne however was never really in doubt at this period. What was being demanded was an expansion of education, greater access to public service, elected

legislatures, a free press, moderate taxation, direct representation in the British Parliament, simultaneous Indian examinations for entry to the civil service, the fostering of Indian industry and reductions of land revenue and excise duties on cotton goods (Sitaramayya 1935: 98-9); in fact all the traditional liberal freedoms and institutions which would benefit the rising educated and professional classes. It could indeed be said, as the Chairman of the Congress Reception Committee, Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, put it in 1893, that the Congress was "the greatest glory of British rule in this country" (Sitaramayya 1935: 100).

But in the 1890's and the first decade of the Twentieth Century, frustration continued and increased. By 1893, there were still only 20 Indians in the Indian Civil Service as against 1,000 Europeans (Sitaramayya 1935: 112). Then Lord Curzon's Police Commission specifically excluded Indians from the Special Services. The general discontent was reinforced by widespread opposition to the proposed partition of Bengal.[5] Business interests too had their grievances. For them, imperialism meant the domination of imported British goods, and the Swadeshi movement was a direct response to the policy of Imperial Preference. In the '90's, the representation of business interests in the

Congress increased considerably. The demand for the development of indigenous capital became a general middle-class grievance. Not until the setting up of the Tariff Board of 1923 was there any real protection of Indian production (Misra 1961: 359). Further indignation was provoked by the military policies of the British Government. It was felt that the Afghan and Burmese Wars, which swelled the Indian public debt, were essentially carried on in the interest of Britain and the commercial interests of the East India Co. (Misra 1961: 358). By the Lucknow Congress of 1916, the demand for self-government was being formalised in definite proposals; namely that the provincial legislative councils should be 4/5 elected and 1/5 nominated, and that there should be direct elections on a wide franchise (Sitaramayya 1935: 43).

The direct parentage of Congress is disputed, but the B.I.A. was certainly a contributory influence, and the tradition of representing landlord interests was firmly maintained, although Congress did tend to be dominated by professional men. In the period 1892 - 9, for instance, 40% of those attending the annual meetings were members of the legal profession (Misra 1961: 353). But the complexion of Congress support varied regionally. In Bengal certainly professional men were dominant. But elsewhere in the country,

support was drawn also from other elements, including zamindars and maharajas, and Congressmen serving on the councils tended systematically to oppose measures designed to protect the peasantry. Resolutions such as the 20th Resolution of the 1915 Bombay Congress,[6] which demanded that a limit should be fixed to the state's demand on land and that permanent settlement should be introduced in all areas, whether ryotwari or zamindari, creating fixity of tenure for the occupants, were regularly proposed and passed. Such resolutions were first and foremost a statement of landlord interests, since permanent settlement made little difference to the cultivating peasant at the bottom of a hierarchy of intermediaries, and even nominally ryotwari areas were not free of intermediaries.

The adequacy or otherwise of a class-interest account. Thus, the interpretation of Congress attitudes along primarily class lines seems in many ways to be supported by the evidence. But there are ways in which this account, by itself, is too crude and one-sided. It has been suggested, for instance, that the identification of nationalist leaders with landlord interests has been grossly overstated. Bipan Chandra sets out to challenge the grounds on which various writers have "accused the Indian leadership of being the spokesman of the privileged zamindars and of ignoring, and even

opposing, the interests of the underprivileged and oppressed ryots" (1964: 144). John McLane similarly challenges the view that "the social vision of the middle class nationalist was determined by his class interests", and argues that "on most issues, the hostility of the Congress to the Government was not an effort by self-seeking Congress leaders to protect their economic interests, despite the Government's occasional success in conveying that impression" (1963: 66-7).

Both writers choose to concentrate on the issue of Congress support for the extension of permanent settlement.[7] They both argue that Congress was stigmatised with a demand it was not making, namely for "the extension of a permanent settlement, of the Bengal or Cornwallis type" (McLane 1963: 68), which would have meant instituting the system of zamindari even where it had not previously existed. Bipan Chandra quotes a considerable amount of evidence to show that much of nationalist opinion was in fact demanding the permanent settlement of <u>revenue</u>, whatever the tenure system. McLane goes further and argues that some nationalist leaders, such as R.C. Dutt, wanted a second kind of settlement both in zamindari areas and where there were less official intermediaries, which would limit the claims of zamindars on tenants.

Such claims do indeed indicate that some nationalist leaders were prepared to represent peasant, as well as landlord, interests. However, both writers conclude that the weight of nationalist opinion was almost certainly on the side of the landlords, even if it was driven by motives other than pure self-interest, such as the reluctance to see the rents received by zamindars transferred to Government hands, or the admiration of the zamindars as "at least one class of people who were able to keep up some standards of social and intellectual excellence" (Chandra 1964: 154).

The conclusion, then, would seem to be that a total explanation of nationalist attitudes in terms of middle-class or elite interests, is indeed too one-sided. The defence of such interests was tempered, on the one hand, by elements of paternalism, and, on the other hand, by less obvious motives such as the reluctance to advocate any reform which would directly profit the Government.

There is, however, another explanation of nationalist attitudes during this period. This is put forward by McLane who argues that the main characteristic of Congress policy was its deliberate aim of avoiding controversy, and promoting unity. This was not a matter of sentiments automatically engendered by nationalism, but of deliberately sponsored aims. This "preoccupation with national unity helped give

the early Congress sessions their air of unreality" (1963: 70), for Congress leaders "usually avoided divisive issues" and, with the exception of permanent settlement, "rarely opposed the Government or advocated changes in the exclusive interest of a limited section of the population". The emphasis in this kind of explanation is on the role of Congress as a nationalist movement making specific demands and furthering specific goals vis à vis the Government. The content of early nationalist ideology was fashioned then, by a combination of economic interest and deliberate tactics.

The Gandhian phase.

1920 onwards; Congress as a mass movement? The conclusion that, in these early stages, the nationalist movement in general, and Congress in particular, existed primarily to further the interests and ambitions of an elite, is one which it would be hard to reject. However, it is often supposed that this middle-class liberal phase was but a precursor, and perhaps a historically necessary precursor, to the more radical mass phase into which the nationalist movement entered with the inception of the "Gandhian era" in the early 1920's. It is therefore important to discover how penetrating this change really was and to what extent

the extension of the base of Congress support represented a permanent broadening in the aims and structure of the nationalist movement.

The clearest turning point seems to be the organisation of Gandhi's 1919 Satyragraha Sabha in response to the Rowlatt Act, a series of Government measures which sought to extend and even enlarge the central authority which had been embodied in the wartime Defense of India Act, and which was regarded by most Indians as a clear suppression of civil liberties. This act of Satyragraha, although suspended before the end of the year, was extremely important in that it was the first time a movement of civil disobedience had been launched in support of a general nationalist cause. The satyragahis were pledged not merely to observe a boycott, but actually to disobey the law and therefore to risk trial and imprisonment (Sitaramayya 1935: 212-5). Now the introduction of a new tactical method would not necessarily of itself have been enough to produce a new distribution of support and participation in political action, though it could perhaps be argued that such a method would appeal more to the young, the more extreme and the more committed. But the introduction of non-violent action of this kind produced such an effect primarily because it was Gandhi who introduced it. Gandhi attached to

the policy a certain justification, a certain philosophy, without the aura of which he held the policy to be invalid.[8] This aura combined elements of Hindu mysticism with a basic humane populism, and, since Gandhi's area of political intervention had already been firmly demonstrated as being amongst the urban workers and the peasants a new element was inevitably introduced into the Congress appeal when non-violence was officially accepted as a policy in 1920.[9]

There is no doubt that the visible image of Congress began to change. As Nehru puts it:- "The whole look of the Congress changed; European clothes vanished, and soon only khadi was to be seen; a new class of delegate chiefly drawn from the lower middle classes, became the type of Congressman; the language used became increasingly Hindustani, or sometimes the language of the province where the session was held, as many of the delegates did not understand English, and there was also a growing prejudice against using a foreign language in our national work; and a new life and enthusiasm and earnestness became evident in Congress gatherings" (1956: 66-7).

And also:- "Gandhi immediately brought about a complete change in (the Congress) constitution. He made it democratic and a mass organisation. Democratic it

had been previously also, but it had so far been limited in franchise and restricted to the upper classes. Now the peasants rolled in, and in its new garb it began to assume the look of a vast agrarian organisation with a strong sprinkling of the middle classes. This agrarian character was to grow. Indian workers also came in, but as individuals and not in their separate organised capacity" (1946: 305).

This was indeed the point at which Congress's new and changing image became evident. From then on, it became part of the philosophy of mainstream nationalism that the movement must be a mass one, and one in which all interests were represented and united. The Gandhian aim was to "work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective vote, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony" (Nehru 1946: 307-8).

Theories about the transition. The onset of this new phase in Congress development is again open to several levels of explanation. In social psychological and functional terms, this seemed to mark the onset of nationalism, par excellance, for there seemed to be the

dawning of a real sense of general unity and a pushing out of the boundaries of solidarity. The question which arises here inevitably is, how deeply rooted was this sense of unity? How effective and enduring was it? What happened to it as the prospect of Independence became a more real one?

Again, Apter provides a description of the later phases of nationalist development. "Quite often", he suggests, "nationalist movements take a leftwards turn during the last phase of the struggle for independence" (1965: 335). With the prospect of independence looming ahead, "nationalism finds it necessary to employ socialism as a development ideology." There is here almost the notion that nationalism and socialism are functionally interchangeable from the social-psychological and sentiment point of view, for "radicalism adds a sense of community - aspects of which are egalitarianism and a sense of shared purpose." But was it in fact the case, insofar as there was a leftwards turn in the Indian nationalist movement, that this was but a natural development of nationalism itself, an application, as it were, of the sentiments of nationalism, to the practical problems of economic policy and development? Was socialism functionally interchangeable

with or complimentary to, nationalism in this way? Perhaps the burden of these questions relates mainly to a later chapter which deals specifically with socialism. But it is relevant to observe here, that, if Apter's account of the logic of nationalism's development is correct and applicable to the Indian situation, it would seem that in the 1920's and 1930's there should have been a strong likelihood of Congress widening its interests and perhaps taking up the cause of peasant and tenant grievances more trenchantly.

Congress and agrarian grievances.

What then were the reasons for this major shift in image and in the apparent purposes of Congress?

The first and perhaps major reason for the change was Gandhi himself and the concept of political action which he brought with him into the Congress organisation. His first involvement in Indian politics had been in defence of kisan interests in a local and specific dispute. This first act of civil disobedience was in April 1917, when he disobeyed a court prohibition order against remaining in the area of Champaran, which would have prevented him from investigating the grievances of the indigo workers (Sitaramayya 1935: 234-8). In the

following year, the second satyagraha was undertaken in the near-famine conditions of Kaira District of Bombay, where the peasants were agitating for the lifting of the rent assessment. In 1918, he had also made inroads into the industrial situation with his involvement in the dispute between the weavers and millowners of Ahmedabad (Sitaramayya 1935: 241-4). He had first argued the case for arbitration, controlled a premature strike and finally inaugurated a strike in defence of a 35% wage increase claim. It was not the case that links between Congress and the industrial workers and peasants had previously been non-existent. But what links there were had been very much peripheral to the control concerns of Congress. Now Gandhi united the potential of such campaigns with the general nationalist movement through the technique of non-violent action, and the political support which he had begun to command amongst the industrial and rural poor. After 1919, civil disobedience and no-tax campaigns began to be organised both in response to specific local grievances and in support of the general aims which were concerning the nationalist movement. The 1921 Chirala campaign, for instance, was conducted against the setting up of a new municipality, and Gandhi here advised the villagers to protest by withdrawing and living

on the boundaries (Sitaramayya 1935: 369-70). The main themes cited in the Bardoli no-tax campaign of 1922, on the other hand, were the general ones of the Khilaphat issue, Swaraj, and opposition to the military rule in Punjab and Government repression following the Bombay riots (Sitaramayya 1935: 392-7).

In a sense then, the enlargement of Congress's support and aims came primarily from an impetus which was external to the development of the core of the movement itself. This represented a challenge to the moderate leadership. Some adapted, if reluctantly, and remained to form the Swaraj Party, which stood for constitutional participation, whilst others removed themselves to a separate moderate camp. In Calcutta in 1919, the first sitting of the Liberal Federation was held, and by the end of 1920, the "extreme" moderates had cut themselves off from Congress completely, subsequently becoming firm bastions of the establishment. Surendra Nath Banerjee, for instance, was knighted, and Lord Sinha became the first Indian Governor of Bihar and Orissa (Sitaramayya 1935: 353).

The political emergence of Gandhi by itself then, was a major influence on the course of Congress at this point, coming as it did in conjunction with the fervour

of antagonism roused in all sections of Indian opinion by the Rowlatt Act and incidents such as Jalianwalabagh, and the generally repressive measures of the Government. The other major factor which was conducive to more widespread protest was the steady worsening of economic conditions. This of course was most noticeable later in the quickening of agrarian unrest in the slump conditions of the 1930's,[10] when Congress campaigns, and particularly Gandhi's Salt March, coincided with the steady recession and consequent fall in prices and worsening of living conditions. But the connection between economic grievances and the readiness to engage in political activity became evident much earlier. Nationalist agitation in the countryside always combined most easily with growing economic hardship.

On the one hand, then, Congress had achieved a link with the peasantry via the historical occurrence of Gandhi, and on the other hand, the readiness of the peasants to be aroused was heightened by the worsening of economic conditions. This did indeed appear to create a unity of purpose and of feeling between the old-style middle-class Congressman and the peasant. But there was no guarantee that this was based on factors which would prove to be more than temporarily specific

or sporadic in their effects.

The euphoria of the 1920's. This uncertainty is really the essence of the history of kisan-Congress relations during the pre-Independence period. The crux of the matter was that, although middle class anti-Government agitation appeared at times to combine naturally with kisan unrest, and although the two could be channelled into protests in the same direction, the alliance was in some ways an uneasy and perhaps even a contingent one. In the decade after 1920, the euphoria of Congress's new-found contact with the rural masses, which produced enthusiasms such as that displayed for the khaddar and spinning movements and also produced social action in the form of the Gandhian Constructive Programme, kept the alliance in action. The rank and file of middle-class Congressmen became aware of the peasant as they had not been before. Jawarhalal's reactions are typical of the rising generation of intellectual Congressmen: "In 1920, I was totally ignorant of labour conditions in factories or fields, and my political outlook was entirely bourgeois . . . I was paying a little more attention to the peasant problem since Gandhi's agrarian movements" (1958: 54). Gandhi's initiation of organised political work in the rural areas meant that Congress workers began

to encounter rural poverty face to face. As Nehru says, "Go to the villages was the slogan, and we trudged many a mile across fields and visited distant villages and addressed peasant meetings" (75).

All this activity generated a new feeling of concern, and a new identification with peasant grievances. But the point is that this feeling was, on the whole, an entirely undoctrinaire attitude. The political sentiments which were produced were first, a new emphasis on national unity; on the all-inclusive and participatory nature of nationhood, and secondly, an appreciation of the acuteness and injustices of rural poverty. This did not engender in many a political doctrine as specific as a Marxist or socialist exegesis in terms of class exploitation. It rather produced an outpouring of sympathy for the underprivileged, tinged with the inevitable guilt of the middle-class observer. Again as Nehru puts it, "Looking at them and their misery, and overflowing gratitude, I was filled with shame and sorrow - shame at my own easy-going and comfortable life and our petty politics of the city which ignored this vast multitude of semi-naked sons and daughters of India" (1958: 66-7). The real problem was what kind of political solution would suggest itself to the average Congressmen as the outcome of this kind of concern.

At the beginning of the 1930's, the impact of the slump gave the alliance a further suffusion of energy.[11] But the mid- and latter-1930's began to see the foundation of independent kisan movements which set themselves the task of formulating specifically peasant demands. This objectification of the peasant movement and its threatened removal from Congress's immediate aegis, was inevitably the cause of increasing friction. Another development within Congress which heightened the process was the formation of the Congress provincial ministries after the 1935 Government of India Act. This meant that numbers of Congressmen now faced the peasants as wielders of authority and implementors of legislative programmes.

The conflicts of the 1930's. In his presidential address at the Lucknow Congress in 1936, Nehru said: "Our policies and ideas are governed far more by a middle-class outlook than by a consideration of the needs of the great majority of the population. Even the problems that trouble us are essentially middle-class problems ... This is partly due I think to a certain historical growth during the last 15 years to which we have failed to adapt ourselves, to a growing urgency of economic problems affecting the masses, and to a rising mass consciousness which does not find sufficient outlet through Congress. This was not so in 1920 and later when there was an organic link between Congress

and the masses, and their needs and desires, vague as they were, found expression in the Congress. But as those needs and desires have taken more definite shape, they have not been so welcome to other elements in the Congress, and that organisational connection has gone.... The middle-class claim to represent the masses had some justification in 1920; it has much less today" (1958: 398).

It is evident that at this point Nehru at least was conscious of the growing rift between Congress and mass rural interests. Gone was the elation of the 1920's, with its emphasis on national unity and participation, when Congress workers "went about the rural areas with the new message, to which they often added, rather vaguely, a removal of kisan grievances, "and when "Swaraj was an all-embracing word to cover everything" (Nehru 1958: 61). It was becoming evident by the mid 1930's that the Gandhian Constructive Programme, the encouragement of khaddar and even the peasant satyagrahas and the Salt March, were not enough to satisfy peasant demands, or the demands which were made on behalf of the peasants. In 1936, the Kisan Congress was formed by a mixed group of Congressmen with N.G. Ranga and Swami Sahajanand Sarasvati as General Secretaries. In 1937, the suffix "Congress" was dropped and the movement renamed the All India Kisan Sabha.

A.N. Dev, in a presidential address, in 1939, justified the foundation of the separate movement by arguing that Congress was a multiclass organisation within which peasants were not fully able to exercise their influence, often because zamindars controlled parts of the party machine (Weiner 1962: 132-3).

The left wing of Congress was reluctant to see the Kisan Movement separate entirely from Congress. At the 1936 Congress, Nehru proposed a resolution supporting the collective affiliation of both Trade Unions and Peasant Leagues. But this was rejected, largely because of the growth of socialist sentiment within Congress, which was provoking a back-lash of more moderate opinion. There was a general feeling that the affiliation of the T.U. and Peasants' Movements would shift the balance of power towards the left.[12] The agrarian resolution passed at this Congress, often cited as symbolic of Congress's increasingly socialistic outlook, was in fact noticeably moderate. There was no specific solution offered to the land problem. Instead, what was rather vaguely advocated was "a thorough change of ... land tenure and revenue systems", and the Provincial Committees were asked, amongst other things, to recommend ways of "safeguarding peasants' interests where there were intermediaries."[13]

It was not long before the newly formed A.I.K.S. was coming into conflict with the agrarian policies of the new Congress ministries. The Congress Socialists had strongly urged the non-acceptance of office by those Congress candidates who had stood in the elections, and this had been proposed, but unsuccessfully, by J.P. Narayan at the Delhi meeting of the All India Congress Committee. Ministries were therefore formed by Congress in six provinces. The progress of these ministries was not only criticised by the Kisan Sabha. Left-wing Congressmen who had not stood in the elections recognised also that their position was ambiguous. As Nehru said: "What alarmed me was a tendency to put down certain vital elements which were considered too advanced or which did not quite fit in with the prevailing outlook" (1941: 108).

There were accusations that the Kisan Sabha was all too eager to create friction and to criticise Congress, and in some places it was felt to function as an informal permanent opposition to the local Congress.[14] But there were real differences of interest or of policy too. In Bihar, for instance, it was claimed by the Kisan Sabha that the Government Tenancy Relief Bill had been watered down in committee to meet the objections of the local zamindars.[15] The Bihar Kisan Sabha agitated for zamindari

abolition, rent reduction, a moratorium on rural debt, and guaranteed higher prices for sugar cane. By the end of 1939, the Congress ministries had resigned, but Congress never regained a close link with the Kisan Sabha, which became increasingly Communist-dominated. Congress in the end resorted to founding its own peasant organisation, the Farmers' Forum (Weiner 1962: 144), but the Kisan Sabha remains the largest national peasant organisation.

The significance of the C.S.P. The other major development of the 1930's was the crystallisation and subsequent growth in influence of the socialist element within Congress, with the formation of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934. This meant there was now a rallying point within Congress for those who were committed to definite views about the nature of the social structure and the nature of conflict. The C.S.P. was by no means a homogeneous group. It contained those of a Gandhian humanitarian socialist persuasion, as well as those who professed to be Marxists, and others who looked rather to the social democratic parties in Europe. Nevertheless, in spite of the diversity of elements represented, its initial programme was, in the orthodox sense, a fairly obviously Marxist one, in that it was based on a class analysis, and advocated the ultimate "socialisation" of all institutions of production, distri-

bution and exchange, and the distribution of goods on the basis of "every one according to his needs." As far as agrarian policy went, the Meerut Statement advocated the "elimination of princes and landlords and all classes of exploiters without compensation", and "redistribution of land amongst peasants and the liquidation of peasant indebtedness" (Singh 1959: 29).

At this point, it is not the details of conflict over the content of policy between different groups within Congress which are of interest. Those must belong to a discussion of the role of socialist thought in the formation of land policy. What is important is that the foundation of the C.S.P. marks the first formal concentration of those amongst the middle class leadership who were prepared on doctrinal grounds to advocate a reorganisation of the traditional pattern of ownership and control as much for the agrarian as for the industrial sector, and who saw such means as the fundamental way of attacking rural poverty, as opposed to the previously prevailing attitude of ameliorating the peasants' lot by means of rent control, education, village reconstruction and the encouragement of cottage industry. This growth of socialist opinion within Congress was one of the main factors which eventually resulted in Congress becoming committed to the

policy plank of zamindari abolition. But it also marks the entrenchment of a firm tradition of rural policy being debated by the middle-class and predominantly professional and intellectual leadership of Congress, with reference primarily to a body of ideals to which they subscribe, rather than with reference to an explicit mandate from the peasantry itself. In the 1930's and 1940's, the C.S.P. became just one of the several political groups attempting to woo kisan opinion, and in this not achieving a very high degree of success. But the general tenor of the C.S.P. demands, although provoking in some quarters a violent response, did eventually filter up, admittedly in a diluted form, to the level of official policy. However, the policy of zamindari abolition as it finally emerged in terms of concrete legislative proposals, was bedevilled, amongst many other things, by this very fact that it derived its formal justification and its immediate impetus from a middle-class intellectual socialist position.

In the post-Independence situation, with its absence of a powerful and united peasant movement to reinforce the demand from below, and with the more than negligible remaining power of the vested interests concerned, this has proved inevitably to be a fatally weakening factor, and one which has only been aggravated by Congress's continuing

ambivalance towards the role and rights of propertied interests. Of course this is tied up also with the realities of power and the political constraints of legislative operation within a democratic, and moreover federal, state, with its congeries of pressure groups. It seems that political realities and ideological inclinations have together meant that any relatively radical policy has had to be combined with some sizeable degree of concession to propertied interests, in this case the landlords. The outcome is liable to be a combination of the trappings of a radical policy with compensating gestures. The controversy over zamindari compensation and over ceiling legislation on sir and khudkhast bears witness to this.

Conflict of interests among peasants. Whilst it is true that the late 1930's saw the divergence of Congress and the official peasant organisations, and that this illustrated Congress's inability to be identified with expressed peasant policy and demands, it would be naive to suppose that there was ever any such entity as "a peasant voice" or any such community of interest as could be described as "the peasant interest" with which Congress could have been identified anyway. The range and degrees of proprietorship and tenancy at the time of independence were extremely complex. Beneath the large landholders, the zamindars or talukdars, who formed

a fraction of the cultivating population, there was a whole hierarchy of smallholders, major and lesser tenants, permanent tenants with some security of tenure and others with very little, as well are share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers. It could hardly be supposed that the interests of such a heterogeneous population could be identical. It was indeed far more likely that they were irreconcilable. So the peasant movement, apart from being as it were, vertically divided on organisational lines, was also horizontally stratified and divided on the grounds of interest. When the general policy plank was a blanket demand for reduction of rent and revenue, or postponement of periodical rent assessments, as it tended to be in the 1920's, or when the demonstration was against a Government-imposed tax, such as the salt tax, it was more possible that a degree of unity would be achieved. However, when policy proposals became more specific and were directed towards furthering the interests of a particular section of the peasantry, it was more likely that interests would conflict. Myron Weiner points out, for instance, that in W. Bengal the A.I.K.S. succeeded in antagonising the class of cultivators who could be described as small-holders by trying to organise the bargardars, or share-croppers (Weiner 1961: 140).

Quite apart from this difficulty of conflicting interests, there was also the problem of overlapping categories. A share-cropper or agricultural labourer might also be classifiable in the category of tenant. As the land records show, the majority of plots in any given area were of very small proportions. In U.P. for instance, at the time of Independence it was found that 38% of cultivated plots were smaller than one acre, and another 20% were between 1 and 2 acres (Z.A.C.115: 6). In such conditions, it was possible for instance, that a man who was for the most part an agricultural labourer, was also a small-scale tenant and even an employer of share-cropping labour. This meant that, although there were conflicts of interest between different groups of cultivators, they would not necessarily fall along clear-cut or traditional lines of division. The conflict of interest existed, but did not always lend itself to formal political organisation.

How did zamindari abolition emerge as a slogan?

The argument so far has been directed towards the conclusion that the nature of the Indian nationalist movement was such that any commitment to a coherent and radical land policy was unlikely to emerge during the pre-Independence period. The elite origins of the movement,

the continuing middle-class nature of the leadership, the necessity to remain an umbrella organisation encompassing both zamindar and peasant elements, but, notwithstanding, the drift of formal peasant organisations away from the Congress fold, combined with the divided nature of the peasant movement itself, which prevented it from acting as a united pressure group; all these factors militated against an identification of nationalist demands wholeheartedly with peasant grievances, as one might have expected to be the case if the Independence movement had originated in the countryside. The question must then arise, how was it that zamindari abolition became one of the first aims of the Indian Government after Independence, and indeed had become an acceptable political goal by the time of the foundation of the Congress National Planning Committee in 1938? The N.P.C., moreover, was far from being a left-wing biased grouping, since it was meant to represent a cross-section of opinion and included representatives of all the provincial governments, not excepting the non-Congress ones.

The zamindars and Congress. At a first impression, evidence concerning the role of the zamindars vis à vis Congress after the 1920's would seem to be conflicting. From several sources, there are references to the active influence of

zamindars within Congress and the inhibiting effect this had, both on the general development of Congress agrarian policy and, specifically, on the legislation implemented by the Congress ministries. On the other hand, since the middle of the Nineteenth Century and certainly later, zamindars had grouped themselves into separate landlord associations which operated quite independently and sometimes came into conflict with Congress. The B.I.A., for instance, had been recognised by the Government as an electoral constituency in the 1919 Reforms.

Certainly many of the allegations that zamindars were dominant came from the left wing of nationalist opinion, which had an interest in castigating Congress as a "bourgeois" institution. The Communist Party of India, for instance, scorned the civil disobedience movements of 1930 and 1932 in accord with the Stalinist line that it was the function of Communist Parties to isolate such bourgeois nationalist movements. A.N. Dev, as already cited, argued from the vantage point of the A.I.K.S. that the Congress machine was partially controlled by zamindari interests, and the Congress Socialist Party cited as one of the justifications for its existence the need to espouse peasant interests, a move which, it was argued, would be bound to antagonise landlord interests in Congress.[16] Nehru also[17]

lays stress on the role of zamindars in Congress, at least in the 1930's. He says of Congress that it was "as a whole ... a purely nationalistic body and included many middling zamindars and a few of the larger ones also. Its leaders were terribly afraid of anything which might raise the class issue, or irritate the zamindar elements. So, right through the first six months of civil disobedience, they avoided calling for a general no-tax campaign in the rural areas, although conditions for this seemed to be ripe" (1936: 232).

An incident at the 1928 Conference which was called at the initiative of Congress to consider the Motilal Nehru Report on a proposed constitution, illustrates the point well, though admittedly this was an all-party conference. Jawarhalal at one point remarked that the men on the platform, including talukdars such as the Maharajah of Mahmudabad and Raja Rampal Singh, were unnecessary members of society. This caused great ill-feeling and the following day, a resolution was passed to the effect that "All titles to private and personal property lawfully acquired and enjoyed at the establishment of the Commonwealth are hereby guaranteed" (Sitaramayya 1935: 552).

There seems then to be at least some evidence of the existence of considerable numbers of zamindars within the

ranks of Congress.[18] We must therefore ask, first, what happened to the weight of zamindar opinion which was regarded as such an influential factor in the 1930's and secondly, how and why did zamindari abolition become a major issue in debates about agrarian policy, so much so that it became a legislative priority after Independence.

The first point is that zamindars were certainly never a homogeneous group. They were, on the contrary, quite markedly stratified.[19] The majority of the largest and most powerful zamindars and talukdars always remained aloof from Congress, though some of them were at times involved in the more moderate wing of the nationalist movement, represented by the Liberal Federation, and some of them went as delegates to the Round Table Conferences. In this capacity however, they were mostly regarded as reactionary and unrepresentative of the mainstream of the nationalist movement. At the 1931 Conference, for instance, Gandhi was Congress's only representative, the other delegates being men such as the Aga Khan. It was Nehru's opinion that the Round Table Conferences in fact only served to consolidate the aristocratic-British alliance.[20]

It was this top stratum of landlords to whom the British had looked at the beginning of the Twentieth Century as their possible political successors, and whose support

they had consistently cultivated. It was also through this class that attempts had been made to counter-attack Congress. In the United Provinces in the 1920's, for instance, at the instigation of the Government, aman sabhas, or anti non-cooperation leagues, were formed to combat the growing strength of the kisan sabhas. By August, 1921, there was an aman sabha in each of the 48 districts of the province. They tried to enlist peasant support by gestures such as the offer of cheap cloth, and the local talukdars were reputedly offended if they were not asked to join these groups (Reeves 1966: 268).

The Government in its turn habitually recognised and consulted talukdar opinion when land legislation was being considered. For instance, over the 1921 amendment to the Oudh Rent Act of 1886, which aimed to extend the protected tenancy period from 7 to 10 years, a condition still markedly inferior to the position obtaining in Agra, the Government ended up by conceding to new demands by the talukdars that extension of sir should be allowed, as should the eviction of sir undertenants and the acquisition of land for "development purposes" (Reeves 1966: 272).

It seems likely that such staunchly pro-British talukdar groups attracted larger numbers to their camp during the 1930's and 1940's as Congress policy became

apparently increasingly extreme. As Erdman puts it in discussing the origins of conservative opinion in India, "from the 1930's onwards, the aristocrats viewed the Congress with increasing hostility and alarm, turning more to the British to defend their interests" (1967: 18). In the process, the most weighty of the landed interests were "siphoned off" from the main body of the nationalist movement and drawn rather to the ranks of, for example, the National Agricultural Parties of Agra and of Oudh which opposed Congress, though somewhat unsuccessfully, in the 1937 elections, the main political objective being nothing more nor less than the retention of the status quo, and to the Zamindars' Union of 1946, whose object was expressly to oppose Zamindari Abolition (Reeves n.d.).

Insofar as zamindar interests were strongly represented in Congress, it was more the case that they were represented by comparatively small landowners, who after all formed the majority. W.C. Neale reflecting on the fact that, in U.P. at Independence, 98.5% of zamindars came into the Zamindari Abolition Committee's category of small zamindars, namely those paying under Rs. 250 revenue per annum, concludes that most zamindars were not in a position to exploit anyone (1962: 252). The great bulk of the 2 million zamindars in U.P. never associated with the Zamindars' Union. It was

to these smaller and middling zamindars that Congress was eventually able to appeal when zamindari abolition had become a policy plank. To such men, abolition was not such a threat as it was to the large talukdars. Many of them were men of commercial interests who had seen land as a business proposition. Provided they were adequately compensated, and Congress never proposed not to give compensation, they were not seriously opposed to the measure. On the other hand, those who were cultivators were unlikely to be affected by any subsequent ceiling legislation. What they would lose was a small income from rent, against which could be set the receipt of compensation which was given in the form of Government stock. The Zamindars' Association of Muzaffarnagar which was made up predominantly of middling zamindars, went so far as to declare to the U.P. Government after Independence, that it would support zamindari abolition if compensation was guaranteed. (Reeves n.d.: 11).

The influence of nationalism. All this is not to say that there was not staunch opposition to abolition, both within and outside Congress. But the fact remains that, by the 1940's, it had become a possible policy objective for Congress and was supported by sections of opinion other than those which could be called left-wing. Part of this

is surely attributable to the steady growth of anti-British feeling, which necessarily accompanied the shift of emphasis on Congress's part from the politics of constitutional parley to those of civil disobedience. In the context of increasing resistance to what is seen as imperialist domination, it is to be expected, both in the natural course of ideological development and as a part of the tactical dynamic of a nationalist movement, that institutions which are associable with the dominating power, should emerge, or should be found, as targets of attack.

The institution of zamindari was an obvious candidate, its whole modern organisation being attributable to the British, and its most obvious representatives being, for the most part, visibly allied with the British. It could become a focus, however justifiably or otherwise, for all that was wrong with rural organisation. It was the imposition of zamindari as an ownership right which was held to have destroyed the unity of the village and which had led to the oppression and exploitation of the tenant. For instance N.G. Ranga, writing in 1949 of the Nineteenth Century Santhal Revolt, describes it as a revolt "not only against the British Raj as such but also against the zamindars who were invested with unjustified and undreamt of powers of ownership of land that peasants had customarily

considered and cultivated as their own for milleniums .... The Santhals never thought that they could be evicted from their ancestral homesteads ... but that had come to happen" (1949: 37). Of course many injustices had flowed from the British assessment of zamindari rights, but it was unlikely that there had not been oppression and exploitation before the British period. However, zamindari as such now came to serve as a symbol of the evils of British imperialism.

This would seem to be a prime example of the way in which ideology may set constraints on, or help actually to define political situations. The tendency for a nationalist ideology of itself to define contemporary issues, to "single out" objects of attack, is not of course an independent or autonomous one. The alliances and policies which actually emerge are always influenced by conjunctions of many factors. In the Indian context, there were many other institutions and practices which could have been regarded by the nationalist movement as legacies of British imperialism, not least the institutions of parliamentary democracy themselves. The venom which was turned against zamindari was reinforced by other values and predominantly by the growing influence of what was labelled "socialist thinking" in Congress. In many cases this was rather a

leaning towards the advocacy of a humane rationalisation of the social structure. However, whatever its impulse, it permitted the limelight to be focused on the evils of zamindari. The commitment to social justice and the antagonism towards a British-implemented and -supported institution was enough to carry Congress, through the process of achieving Independence, into legislation to implement this goal.

Conclusion.

The conclusion must be that the relationship between nationalism and agrarian policy before Independence was a complex one, and one with which no single interpretation of the nature of ideology can cope. In the early pre-Gandhian phase, it is clear that class or elite interests were a large component in the demands of the nationalist movement, and this clearly had repercussions on the attitude of nationalist leaders to agrarian problems and proposed policies.

A consideration of the social psychological effects of nationalism in both the early and the Gandhian phases is relevant mostly because it draws attention to the need to investigate the boundaries of felt national solidarity and the way in which such sentiments could, or could not,

be made to mesh with sectional interests. It also draws attention to the possibility that the sentiments of national solidarity may be deliberately appealed to and deliberately sponsored, in which case their diffusion is less automatic than might otherwise be supposed, and the interests and motives of the leaders have to be taken into account.

In all these respects, the influence of nationalism tended to deflect attention and energy from a consciousness, and a concrete formulation, of the conflict-producing distributional problems of domestic policy. This was a role which was more likely to be fulfilled by socialism. However, in the case of zamindari abolition, nationalism does seem to have contributed a reinforcing motive to the primarily socialistic demand for agrarian reform. It is the task of the following chapter to examine more fully the influence of socialism in this pre-Independence period.

1. In the case of nationalism, the extent of the sentiment tends to be defined by Easton purely in terms of the non-fulfilment of demands. In other words, nationalism or separatism arises when the authorities are seen to deal inadequately with the specific demands of a group and the group can be identified no more specifically then by the non-fulment of its demands. The example of the American Negro is quoted. "In the U.S., for example, small but vocal Negro groups have periodically sought an independent political community as a result of their failure to obtain both a regime and other non-political conditions that they have considered necessary to meet their minimum expectations" (1965: 321). However, it is also recognised that sometimes the growth of nationalism cannot be related to the desire for a "new or modified regime" which would be more amenable to group demands. In the case of, as it were, pure separatism, a group's demands will be simply for ultimate "mastery over its own political destiny" (32). In the case of the African dependencies for instance, "no transformation in regime is manifestly satisfactory today in the face of the perception among the political leadership..... that freedom and formal political independence from white and Western rule, and the

indignities associated with it, are the minimal conditions for self-fulfilment."

2. Or at least this has applied to Marxist theory as embodied in Soviet attitudes. Kautsky, in "Political change in underdeveloped countries" (1962), points out how ambivalent Russian foreign policy has been towards nationalist and anti-colonial movements in the developing nations. This partly stemmed from the USSR's own insistence that the 1917 Revolution had been a proletarian one, in accord with Marxist expectations. Up till the mid-1930's, the USSR therefore maintained the line that only genuinely proletarian movements in other countries could be supported. Thereafter, the emphasis changed and it seemed to be considered legitimate to support any movement which opposed colonialism and imperialism.

3. Desai argues that "it frequently happened in India that, where the Hindus were landlords and the Muslims were peasants, often due to (the) instigation of communalists, economic class conflict between them assumed communal forms (1966: 190). The case is cited of the 1922 Moplah Rebellion in Malabar, where Muslim Moplah tenants confronted Brahmin landlords. It is interesting also to note Nehru's argument that greater unity could not have been achieved with the Muslim League in U.P. in 1937, because it was "largely representative of the big zamindars",

and this would have hindered the Congress ministry's ability to pass agrarian relief legislation (1959:1).

4. Of the four original provisions in the Act which would have benefitted the ryot, three (limits on the enhancement of rent, provision for compensation after ejectment, and the granting of a right of transfer), were dropped, and one (acquisition of occupancy rights), was watered down (Chandra 1964: 157-8).

5. This was officially opposed at the 21st Session of Congress at Kasi in 1905 (Sitaramayya 1935: 69).

6. For the 1915 Bombay Resolution, see: Sitaramayya 1935: 209, and for a list of other similar resolutions in this period, see: Sitaramayya: 59-61.

7. Bipan Chandra also discusses the Bengal Rent Bill of 1883 mentioned above, arguing that some sections of the British Indian Association and of nationalist opinion (e.g., Surendranath Banerjee and many newspapers, such as the Bengalee and the Mahratta) did support the tenant-biased clauses (1964: 158-161).

8. In defining Satyagraha, Gandhi said: "Satyagraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force." (1951:3). The didactic and spiritual elements of Satyagraha are well illustrated in the remark: "In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy

of Satyagraha are so great and the doctrine so simple that it can be preached even to children"(7).

9. The text of the relevant Calcutta Congress resolution is given in Sitaramayya 1935: 340-2.

10. Although he is concerned to argue that the recession was not the main or only cause of the failure of the agricultural market mechanism, the effects of the Depression of the 1930's on agrarian conditions is described, in the context of U.P. particularly, by W.C. Neale (1962: 176-8). "The burden of the Depression", he says, "fell upon the rural areas, and particularly upon agriculture" (176).

11. Nehru writes: "The civil disobedience movement of 1930 happened to fit unbeknown to its leaders at first, with the great world slump in industry and agriculture. The rural masses were powerfully affected by this slump, and they turned to the Congress and civil disobedience. For them it was not a matter of a fine constitution drawn up in London or elsewhere, but of a basic change in the land system, especially in zamindari areas (1958:205).

12. Congress did however set up a "Mass Contact Committee", which aimed to bring the kisans and mazdoors into Congress. H.K. Singh (1959) reports that the C.S.P. regarded this as"a ruse by the Congress to play down the Socialists' demand for the collective affiliation of peasants and

workers organisations to the Congress, since the Congress leaders obviously thought any "Mass Contact" established would be under their supervision" (38). In any case, the Committee fizzled out without reporting.

13. For the text of the Resolution, see Chapter 3 below.

14. Nehru suggested that "all manner of undesirables" used the Kisan Sabhas as a cover. Whether this was true or not, it seems clear that the Kisan Sabhas were very outspoken and not always tactically restrained. As Walter Hauser says of the demands made by the Bihar Kisan Sabha in the 1930's, "the sharp divisions within the Congress that came over these flowed as much from the vigour and impatience with which they were made by the Kisan Sabha leadership, as from the nature and extent of the demands themselves" (1963: 62).

15. H.K. Singh (1959: 39:40) reports the omitted clauses as i) reversion of land to evicted tenants, ii) illegal eviction to be a cognisable offence, and iii) the banning of sale of homesteads for failure to pay rent. Also, Hauser quotes Rajendra Prasad "who as leader of the Bihar Congress arranged the agreement with the zamindars", as saying that "They (the zamindars) were rich and had resources and were capable of organising themselves." Hence they "could certainly resort to dilatory tactics and delay successful operation of an Act" (1963: 63).

Hauser reports that specific measures, such as a 3-year moratorium on rent arrears, were included in a report drawn up by the Congress, but the report was then withheld, and these measures did not appear in the subsequent legislation.

16. J.P. Naryan argued that because Congress was primarily middle-class in outlook, it was naturally geared more towards gaining seats in legislatures than to organising a mass movement, and that this was an aim which the C.S.P., unfettered by bourgeois and landlord interests, must pursue (1946: 144).

17. Nehru undoubtedly spoke with a socialist bias, but not from within the C.S.P. itself. Although he clearly sympathised with it, his first allegiance was always to the parent body. As Brecher puts it, "Even though he acted as the C.S.P.'s godfather and continued to give it his blessing, Nehru never associated himself officially with this group" (1959: 218).

18. Walter Hauser says of Congress in the 1920's and 1930's, that it "was being transformed into a mass movement ... But Congress appealed for the unity of all classes and interests in this struggle, including the zamindars who were an important influence in it" (1963: 58).

19. P. Reeves (1961) gives evidence of the stratification of zamindars in U.P. through a description of their

grouping in separate associations.

20. Nehru says of the delegates, "As a whole, they represented, politically and socially, the most reactionary elements in India" (1958: 208).

CHAPTER 3

Socialism, Gandhism, and Congress Policy Before Independence

Socialism and theories of ideology.

Socialism and national unity. In the context of the developing nations, it sometimes seems that socialism has become a vague but necessary part of national politics, an obligatory component of the whole ethos of progress and development. This would seem to support Apter's thesis that socialism and nationalism temd to be functionally interchangeable in social psychological terms, and that socialism will take over from nationalism when "independence is no longer the issue" and when "the obvious act of changing authority from outside to inside turns out to be less simple than appears" (1965: 335). Socialism is argued to be attractive in this situation because it "becomes the ethic for a system of political discipline emphasising science" (329). In this sense, it is far removed from the specific economic and class doctrines of Marxism. "African socialism", for instance, often has strong nationalist or pan-nationalist undertones in terms of negritude, and, as Apter puts it,

"prefers at present to delineate core values appropriate to modernisation rather than limit itself prematurely to particular economic forms." He even concludes that "quite often...the socialism of Africa is merely another name for nationalism." Socialism in this sense seems to have become a porous doctrine absorbing various strands of ideological content, and in return effusing an aura of national togetherness and progress.[1]

This is perhaps no new phenomen. Certainly socialism had been harnessed to strange and various causes before the emergence of "the developing nations" as a group concept. The employment of a segment of socialist ideas in conjunction with fascist ones to produce national socialism was perhaps the most bizarre alliance of all, epitomised by Hitler's definition of socialism implicit in the remark "Whoever has understood our great national anthem, 'Deutschland, Deutschland uber alles' to mean that nothing in the wide world surpasses in his eyes this Germany, people and land, land and people, that man is a Socialist" (Boepple 1934: 32).

Socialism then, like many ideologies which originally had a specific content, may well acquire other functions and levels of appeal, just as communism, envisaged by Marx as objective political theory, has itself become a normative

and persuasive ideology. It may be that this process has affected socialism in the Indian context also, so that it has become today a pro-lable, an accepted part of the political and national heritage. It can even be argued that the contemporary parties of the right have to argue within the vocabulary of socialist thinking. National planning, for instance, a tool originally associated with socialist ideas, is one which can hardly be explicitly rejected in toto by any party wishing to participate seriously in the political debate.[2]

Socialism and sectional interests. However, the possible flexability and transferability of socialism admitted, and its versatility as an ideology recognised, it is still of course true that there have been distinct strands within the whole amalgam of socialist thinking which do represent more or less specific theories about patterns of social and economic organisation. In India the development of various streams of socialist thought, and their relative influence on Congress both before and after Independence, may be expected to have been of direct importance for the rural sector of society. All wings of socialist opinion, however vague or utopian, have had theories and attitudes of some variety towards agriculture, the landlord and the peasant. In a

sense, and this is an aspect which Apter appears to deny, whilst nationalism directs attention away from sectional interests by canalizing energies into the channel of opposition to imperialism, and is thus bound to try and minimise internal conflict, socialism is committed to doing the reverse, in that its analysis necessarily starts from some sort of premise about group conflicts. Where socialism develops the cohesive function referred to above, it must use this conflict premise as a jumping-off ground for urging the necessity for conciliation and harmony. This is the tendency wherever socialism becomes a national orthodoxy, and wherever the leadership has an interest in promoting unity and solidarity on a mass basis, as in the African context. Accordingly, it may well be that the status and function of socialism in pre-Independence India will be found to contrast somewhat with its status and function after the achievement of Independence, since when socialism has indeed become part of a sort of national orthodoxy. Apter's account of socialism may well apply more aptly therefore in the post-Independence situation.

This is not to argue that some types of socialistic thinking did not have harmony-promoting tendencies even before Independence. Insofar as Gandhian thought produced

socialist offshoots, they tended very definitely towards an emphasis on conciliation rather than conflict, whether in terms of classes, groups or individuals. Nevertheless, even this more consensual brand of socialism can hardly by-pass a basic belief in the initial divergence of interests within society. It too must devote attention to the concrete problems of social organisation and social justice, the ownership of property and the distribution of goods, even if the solution it evolves may appear to be evasive. Insofar as Gandhism was evasive about these problems, there is a case for considering whether it was not, in general, more adequately described as anti - rather than pseudo - socialist.[3] But clearly much depends on the definition of socialism employed, and judgment should perhaps be deferred until the various shades of socialist opinion have been more closely examined.

In seeking to discover how socialism has affected ideas about agrarian policy, it seems logical first to outline the various strands of socialist thought in India before Independence, and then to explore on the one hand the factors which stimulated or inhibited their tendency to produce concrete social recipes, and on the other hand, those which determined the degree of support each brand of

thought could command; in other words, to discover first why and how concretely each type of socialist thought formulated policies, and specifically about the rural sector, and then to assess how relatively influential such various socialist arguments were. It will then be possible to see whether there was a change in the context of the debate after Independence, when the role of Congress altered from that of front-line opposition agitator to that of established government party. In terms of political support and opposition, the implications of any degree of adherence to socialist policies certainly might be expected to change at this point when the issues are no longer ones of theoretical debate but of practical implementation via legislation. As well as forcing the programme into concrete terms, and terms which will meet the logic of the new national and international situation, this transition could also be expected to rally the opposition into concrete form. The prospect of a dissenting backlash becomes a real problem and a factor which itself may have a feedback onto policy formation. The way vested interests affected by legislation eventually reacted is therefore of as much interest as the way in which Congress itself reacted within the constraints of its new role.

The heterogeneity of socialist thought in India.

If one dubious point in Apter's analysis is thus the assumption that socialism and nationalism in developing countries will generally, and even before Independence, make similar contributions to the establishment of identity and solidarity, and so will tend to be complementary or sequential, another is the assumption that socialism in such contexts can be treated as a homogeneous entity. It is important to consider whether the general heading of socialism in given situations in fact includes different and possibly contradictory ideological elements.

It is convenient to divide socialist thinking in India into three camps; Marxist, social democratic and perhaps, Gandhian. Needless to say, this is a somewhat artificial process since many politicians are intensely eclectic in their outlook and manage to unite elements from several sources into a more or less consistent position, though this is a tendency which is not unique to India. As Morris-Jones says of contemporary India, "Some part of Marxism forms an element in the make-up of most members of the Indian intellegentsia" (1964: 210). Perhaps this is an overstatement, but it serves to indicate how widely-diffused socialist elements of some kind can appear to be to the observer of

Indian politics.

How valid then is it to try and separate out the different strands of socialist thought? It may be that this is a more valid exercise in the pre-Independence era than in the later period. This may sound paradoxical, for there is a sense in which socialist ideas, if not ideology, were inevitably vaguer in the pre-Independence period. They were developed, as it were, in the political wilderness and their vocabulary was that of slogans and ultimate aims rather than concrete policies. However, precisely because of these factors, there was a sense in which the degrees of socialist thought were clearer and more clearly identifiable. Precisely because they were not attached to going policies and, for the most part, not even harnessed to the mainstream of the nationalist movement, with its middle-class interests, they were comparitively sharply expressed. Socialism was a means of expressing what could be and what ought ideally to be. It had not become a doctrine which is defiantly clung to in the face of opposition and which is used to justify policies which themselves are pragmatic and less than utopian. It is this which has made of socialism a somewhat diffuse and, in a non-pejorative sense, a devalued or depreciated political label, since Independence. In the

1930s socialism was a suspect term, and the expression of socialist ideas enough to make the hackles of the Congress right-wing rise in indignation, as when the more conservative faction, led by Sardar Patel and Rajenda Prasad, threatened to resign after the Lucknow Congress because of what they called "the preaching and emphasising of socialism". It is still of course the case that substantive socialist policies are liable to provoke fierce opposition in India, but they are unlikely to be opposed purely on the grounds of being socialistic. New stigmas have to be resorted to, such as those of Sovietism, communism or totalitarianism.

Marxism, social democracy and Gandhian socialism. Such a tripartite division of socialist thought as this inevitably represents an over-simplification. The left in politics seems to be constitutionally subject to factionalism and splintering, and each so-called position could be finely sub-divided into a myriad other gradations of doctrine. However, for this purpose, these three labels may be held to represent gross differences of outlook which may be described in general terms. Perhaps all three would subscribe to similar broad long-term aims relating to human equality of status, and certainly a "more equal" distribution of material resources and a greater participation

in the process of economic production. Where they differ most obviously is in terms of 1) the social structural means which it is envisaged will best approximate to these aims, and 2) the concrete methods by which both these structural prerequisites and the ultimate goals are to be achieved. Again in highly oversimplified terms, it might be argued that Marxism and social democracy are relatively united over the social structure envisaged, and in this they both differ from Gandhian socialism, whereas social democracy and Gandhian socialism are united over the political means to be employed and in this they stand in opposition to the Marxists. It remains to specify in concrete terms what these differences amount to.

Marxist socialism. Marxism in India in the 1920s and 1930s was not a monopoly of the C.P.I. There were those in the C.S.P., most noticeably J.P. Narayan and A.N. Dev, who were essentially located towards the Marxist end of the socialist spectrum. Although only the C.P.I. was directly influenced by Moscow, Marxist thought of all brands was influenced by the Soviet example, and by orthodox Marxist ideology.

The first characteristic of the Marxist position tended to be an expectation that the revolution when it came would be a product of political consciousness amongst the

industrial proletariat. In spite of the fact that the revolution in Russia had not been, by any stretch of the imagination, the product of outworn capitalism, it continued to be the orthodox Marxist line that revolution could only originate in the industrial sector. Secondly, the anti-imperialist and the class struggle were believed to be inevitably linked, since the interests of the exploiting classes were identified with those of the colonial power. This made for acute ambivalence, within the CPI particularly, over its attitude to Congress as a " bourgeois" nationalist movement.[4] Finally, the reconstitution of society could only be achieved on a macro level by the liquidation of capitalism and the capitalist alike, and by the totally common ownership of the means of production. On the Soviet model, agriculture too must be "proletarianised" and communalised by state ownership and collectivisation.

Social democracy, or democratic socialism. Social democracy is potentially difficult to characterise. If it is united with Marxism in a belief in the inevitability of class conflict and the desirability of a radical restructuring of society, but yet it sympathises with Gandhism in its adherence to voluntaristic and gradualist methods, then the

end policy product must to some extent be equivocal or conditional. This of course is the acute difficulty which always faces a social democratic party; namely that of how to implement its goals without resort to force and violence. This dilemma also lays such a party open to the charge of not really believing in the gaols which it so earnestly advocates before coming to power, but which it may find itself powerless to implement. And in some cases this may be a relevant query. Indeed some social democrats may admit to being dubious about a radical restructuring of society in terms of the reorganisation of institutions and property relations. It could be argued that the English Fabians were not radicals in this respect, that writers such as Shaw and the Webbs were not really advocating abrupt change of this kind. Social democracy, then, covers a range of positions, from those who advocate radical reorganisation but hesitate to impose it, to those who merely advocate the marginal changes which are more likely to be implementable by more voluntaristic methods.

Within the C.S.P., Ashok Mehta and Minoo Masani were the most obvious representatives of the social democratic outlook. Mehta was an active Trade Union worker and was influenced by European social democratic thought (Singh 1959:

20-1), whilst Masani had been at L.S.E. and had there acquired a generally Fabian attitude. Surely also Nehru's socialism, insofar as it is categorisable, must be classified as social deomocratic. His ideas were modified with the years, but the writings and speeches of the 1930's were clearly influenced by Marxist class and economic doctrine. Perhaps, it is true, "Marxism was too complete, too coherent a doctrine to contain Nehru" and perhaps he "used its concepts when it suited him" and "was a Marxist without the logic of Marxism" (Morris-Jones 1964: 211). But the Marxist influence was undoubtedly there. As early as 1926, with the formation of the Indian workers and Peasants Party in Bengal, as Nehru puts it "We even tried....to draw up a mild Socialist programme. We declared that the existing land system must go and that there should be no intermediaries between the State and the cultivators" (Nehru 1958: 139). In the 1930's, Nehru's espousal of Marxist-based theory became much more explicit. Just before the War, he wrote "The Marxian philosophy appeals to me in a broad sense and helps me to understand the processes of history...Laissez-faire is dead... Today the community has to be organised in order to establish social and economic justice. This

organisation is possible on the Fascist basis, but this does not bring justice or equality, and is essentially unsound. The only other way is the Socialist way. Liberty and democracy have no meaning without equality, and equality cannot be established so long as the principal instruments of production are privately owned" (1941: 117). Clearly Nehru at this stage regarded the nationalist struggle as an integral part of a fight to reconstruct society along Marxist socialist lines. His attitude to agriculture is revealed in a view he put forward at a meeting in London in 1936: "I think that nothing short of large-scale collective or co-operative farming will deal effectively with the land question...The whole basis should be, in my opinion, not the profit motive, but producing for consumption" (Bright 1950: 322).

These then could loosely be called Marxist aims. The specifically social democratic aspect is the unpreparedness to countenance violence in the process of achieving such aims. Mehta was always opposed to 'Russian' tactics in the fight for Independence, and he and Masani were both leading opponents of the C.P.I. - C.S.P. United Front between 1936 and 1939, and both threatened to resign from the Executive when Narayan's list, conceding a third of

the seats to the communists, was accepted in 1938 (Singh 1959: 63-6). But the social democratic position not only rejects violence in the quest for power, but also in the implementation of policy. Here again, Nehru puts the case clearly. On the one hand he writes, "the problem of achieving freedom [becomes] one of revising vested interests in favour of the masses," but on the other hand, "we do not wish to injure any class or group, and the [divesting] should be done as gently as possible and with every effort to avoid injury" (Bright 1950: 187). Much later, in fact after Independence and the abolition legislation, Nehru remarked quite consistently in the course of a speech in the U.S.A., "We are putting an end to the big landlord system, the zamindari system...We are doing it peacefully and more or less co-operatively, with compensation. It is rather a burden, the business of compensating landowners, but anyhow it avoids conflict and probably is cheaper in the end" (Norman 1965 II: 496).

Gandhian socialism. Gandhi's economic and social theories, or rather those which are built on Gandhian premises, can only be described as having conflicting implications in terms of the left-right political spectrum, at least if the use to which they have been put by successive politicians

is anything to go by. In many ways, Gandhian ideas seem to have presented only obstacles and hindrances to what might be imagined to be socialist policies. Doctrines of class harmony and deferring to the interests concerned have stood in the way of economic regulation, as in the concession to the business community's pressure for the decontrol of food prices in 1947, which was a major contributing factor in the ensuing inflation.[5] The theory of trusteeship was an obvious threat to zamindari abolition, and the whole cottage industry obsession created obstacles in the path of large-scale industrialisation.

Nevertheless, there were those who managed to extract from Gandhism, ideas and values which could be regarded as an inspiration towards socialism, or which could be reconciled with socialist ideas from other sources. And perhaps this was not so difficult in the context of the guild-craft William Morris socialist tradition, with which the Gandhian emphasis on village self-sufficiency and the virtues of simple production techniques has much in common. Also in Gandhi's ideas there was of course a supreme emphasis on equality and improvement in the humanitarian sense, even if this sometimes seemed to a frustrated Nehru more like an attempt to reduce the whole of society to the subsistence

level of the peasant, rather than an urge to enable all to share in the material benefits of an industrialised society and its higher standards of living. (As Nehru wrote in prison in 1934, "He has no desire to raise the standards of the masses beyond a certain very modest competence, for higher standards and leisure may lead to self-indulgence and sin" 1959: 319).

But the humanitarian elements were clear; his commitment to the poor and underprivileged, his agitation on behalf of workers' and peasants' grievances, and above all, the campaign for the advancement of the Harijans. Perhaps these elements in themselves can hardly be claimed as entailing a commitment to socialism. Nehru certainly felt the label was misused in this sense. As he said of Gandhi, "Sometimes he calls himself a socialist, but he uses the word in a sense peculiar to himself which has little or nothing to do with the economic frame-work of society which usually goes by the name of socialism. Following his lead a number of prominent Congressmen have taken to the use of that word, meaning thereby a kind of muddled humanitarianism" (1958: 318).

But even if these attitudes themselves amounted only to a diluted or fringe kind of socialism, in the minds of

some they nevertheless became firmly associated with the label. Those who were attracted to the socialist camp but lacked a Marxist basis, found in the aura of village reconstruction an alternative vision to that of the collectivised centralised society. But the alternatives were not always as clearly divided as this, and many managed to subscribe simultaneously to elements of both models. The complicated fusions and allegiances are illustrated by the vacillations which have occurred in the careers of more than a few politicians, as individuals have shifted from one to another element in the conjunction of ideas which has been associated with socialism. Achyuta Patwardham, for instance, could have been called a Gandhian socialist in the 1930's, with his theosophical upbringing and education at Benaras Hindu University. But he joined the C.S.P. with its predominantly Marxist-based economic programme, and left Congress with the party in 1948 (Singh 1959: 1920). However, he finally withdrew from party politics to work with J. Krishna Murthy's movement for New Education. This must surely represent a return to the most simple level of humanitarian Gandhian socialism.

Furthermore, the fact that parts of the Gandhian outlook could be allied with more orthodox socialist views seems even

to have provided a possible means of transit for some lapsed socialists towards those elements in Gandhism which definitely worked against what might be called classical socialist policies. In their different ways, both Narayan and Masani have made this kind of transition, Narayan moving from an originally Marxist position to a final advocacy of a-factional decentralisation,[6] and Masani having moved from a Fabian outlook to a modern anti-planning, anti-state, pro-private enterprise position. Hence perhaps Masani's status as a Gandhian is disputable;[7] being a Parsi and a "modern" man, he is unsympathetic with traditional Hindu institutions such as the joint family, but he is certainly part of the anti-centralisation nexus which derives prestige and impetus from the Gandhian aura. It may of course be simpler to say that these men have just changed camps completely, but the influence and availability of Gandhian thinking, with its ambivalent implications, may well facilitate the process.

Relative influence of the streams of socialist thought. Differences of time perspective. The Gandhian wing of socialism has thus been the most porous and the most doctrinally unstable. It certainly bequeathed to Congress

policy, insofar as socialist goals were accepted, an ambivalence which perhaps still persists. This was partly because Gandhian activities had already taken root in the pre-Independence period, and this in itself was a product of the fact that Gandhism, in terms of policy and visions of society, lay at the small-scale end of the socialist spectrum. The more far-reaching and large-scale were visions of the socialist society, the less likely were the seers of such visions to be able to begin to put them into practice in the immediate environment, and the more likely were they to be thrust back onto formulating slogan-governed blueprints whose implementation could only be deferred. This is in no sense an accusation of tactical ineptitude on the part of any particular brand of socialist thought. It is just an inevitable fact and one which in a sense gave the Gandhians an advantage, in that their policies could take concrete form and become accepted as part of the means of political action.

All this applies most acutely to rural policy. Whilst the communists could only formulate ultimate demands for abolition and collectivisation, and all their energies were channeled into achieving the end state, the Gandhians could plod steadily on with khadi and spinning and village

reconstruction. There was of course no guarantee that the here-and-now policy would prove to be more politically acceptable than the construction of long-term visions, to the rural populace themselves. There was merely a likelihood that these methods would become established as a political idiom enhanced by the prestige of Gandhi, and would thus gain a footing in the attitudes of legislators to rural policy. The Marxists could argue, as those in the C.S.P. did, particularly after Independence, that such methods were reactionary and only served to prop up the old regime,[8] but by then they were too entrenched and too much a political and ideological "habit" to be easily discarded. Not only were they entrenched, but there were other factors which were liable to reinforce their persistence. This leads on to the whole debate about which sectors of the peasantry have really benifited most from the Agricultural Extension and Community Development programmes, whether the balance of power has really been disturbed in the villages, and to what extent the new programmes have merely provided a new currency of patronage, all questions which relate rather to the actual implementation of agrarian policy after Independence. It is sufficient to point out here that the more extreme was the socialist thinking before

Independence, the less likely it was to be expressed in concretely worked-out policies. Independence found the more Marxist elements with more slogan than detail, and it can be argued that the post-Independence socialism of Congress has in some ways and for many reasons, continued more on the level of slogan than of substance.

Engrossment with strategy. This gradation of the concreteness of social recipes is evident in a comparison of the records before Independence. At one end of the spectrum, the C.P.I. was most engrossed with the question of whether the nationalist movement should be espoused at all. In the 1920's, Lenin's sympathy with Asian nationalism had led to the founding of a Far Eastern Bureau in Shanghai to work in the colonial East. But this phase ended with Stalin's domination of the International and general suspicion of "bourgeois" nationalist movements.[9] Hence the C.P.I. kept aloof from the civil disobedience campaigns of 1930 and 1932. This was followed by a period of cooperation and attempted infiltration within the C.S.P. after the 7th Congress of the Communist International in 1935 when Dimitrov had emphasised the isolation of the colonial communist parties. But the Communists were again isolated by their support for the War effort in 1941 when the

Germans attacked the U.S.S.R., and by their support for partition, influenced this time by the Soviet theory of nationalities.

During the War, with most of the Congress leaders in gaol, the C.P.I. did gain ground at the grass-roots level, and especially in the A.I.K.S. (Weiner 1962: 134) but this was not reflected in its influence on Congress policy, which remained minimal.

Such socialist ideas as did percolate up to the Congress official level were more directly due to the influence of the C.S.P. as a pressure group and to individual intellectual social democrats such as Nehru who exercised power within the Congress Executive. But the C.S.P.'s energies and priorities also were affected by its concern with the relative merits of socialism and nationalism. In general it accepted that the nationalist struggle must take priority, and it was therefore not opposed to the main body of Congress, but it often showed a frustration with Congress tactics. In the Quit India movement of 1942, Narayan, who had always given only qualified support to Gandhian tactics, hoped for a violent revolutionary wave to overthrow imperialism, and when the All India Congress Committee was arrested, he and Lohia

set up a guerilla organisation known as Azad Dasta (Singh 1959: 80-83).

Their concern with tactics was again manifest in the wrangles over the Cabinet Mission proposals of 1946, when the socialists favoured outright rejection, and they were also opposed to participation in the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government. The correlation between adherence to Marxist economic theory and advocacy of more violent tactics was a fairly firm one. This meant that the more Marxist wing of the C.S.P. was consistently at odds with Congress on both counts. But of course neither Gandhians nor, on the whole, social democrats diverged from Congress on the issue of tactics, and in 1942 the C.S.P. gave birth to another agency called the Satyagraha Samiti, which disapproved of violence and which functioned in rivalry to the Azad Dasta.

Of all the brands of socialist thought, Marxian ideas were thus the least likely to gain influence in Congress, both because of their economic implications and because of their conjunction with violent tactics, and Gandhian ideas the most likely to gain sway because of their opposite attributes. Marxist and social democratic influence in Congress, insofar as it did grow, was likely to do so in spite of Gandhi's influence. The Gandhian influence in

Congress, as regards receptivity to Marxist-socialist ideas, served to reinforce the effects of its class composition.

Socialism and Congress policy.

The growth of socialism in Congress? In spite of these inhibiting factors, to what extent had socialist ideas of whatever brand filtered into Congress policy by 1947? How successful were the various pressure groups in getting socialist ideas into the official doctrine? As early as 1928 Nehru's Independence League declared itself in favour of "a Social Democratic state...and State control of the means of production and distribution. More specifically, it called for steeply graduated income and inheritance taxes; universal, free and compusory primary education; adult suffrage; a minimum living wage; excess profits taxes; support for T.U's; unemployment insurance; an 8-hour work-day; the abolition of untouchability; equal status for the sexes; and far-reaching land reforms - removal of intermediares, partial annulment of debts, creation of small-holdings" (Bracher 1959: 130). This was a relatively radical programme, but it is interesting to note that there was no mention of cooperative ownership and the emphasis was rather on peasant proprietorship.

But it was not until 1931 that any vaguely socialist tenets appeared in the Congress creed. The emphasis on economic matters in the 1920's was limited to the boycott of foreign cloth, and the advocacy of spinning and khaddar. For most Congressmen, these were enough, and acceptable as symbols of the political motives behind the swadeshi movement. As Nehru said in Court in 1922, "the salvation of India and of her hungry millions demands the use of the charkha and the wearing of khaddar" (Gopal 1962:16). But by the 1930's conflicts over the doctrinal direction of economic ideas were beginning to crystallise. By 1934, those who called themselves socialists had decided it was necessary to band together in a distinct group, but their decision to remain within the confines of Congress was symptomatic both of their desire not to detract from the nationalist cause and of their hope of pressing socialist ideas within Congress. Nehru's importance in this respect was that he remained a part of the central Congress leadership and thus became a mouthpiece for socialist ideas, though he was nearly driven to resign by the ambiguity of the position in 1936.[10]

It was an uphill fight to gain any sort of acceptance for Marxist-socialist ideas. Congress, under the influence

of Gandhi and its natural middle-class inclinations, had so far striven to combine advocacy of social welfare measures with ideas of class harmony and cooperation. The Swaraj Party, the constitutional wing of Congress which was re-established in 1924, had held the attitude that "On the one hand we must find out a way of organisation by which we can prevent the exploitation of labour by capitalists or by landlords, but on the other hand we must be on our guard to see that these very organisations may not themselves be the sources of oppression by nursing extravagant and unreasonable demands."[11] The Cawnpore Congress of the following year adopted a Constructive Programme which "shall include the capture of Local Bodies, the organisation of villages, the promotion of education on national lines, the organisation of Labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of relations between employers and workmen, and between landlords and tenants; and the general advancement of the national, economic, industrial and commercial interests of the country" (Sitaramayya 1935: 499). The phrase "the adjustment of relations" seems a typically Gandhian one.

As Congress followed Congress, the only advance that was made in such resolutions was that they became slightly more explicit about the social improvements desired. The

1928 Calcutta Resolution on a Future Programme, for instance, declared that "measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses; it will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their conditions. Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up work among the city labourers and in village reconstruction, in addition to what is being done through the spinning wheel and khaddar; such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure the cooperation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits" (Sitaramayya 1935: 562).

1931, however, saw the first shift in emphasis towards the socialist end of the spectrum, with the acceptance of the Karachi Resolution on Fundamental Rights. It was a very mild step and possibly even "This was not socialism at all and a capitalist state could easily accept almost everything contained in that resolution" (Nehru, 1958: 197). Nevertheless, taken together with the 1936 Lucknow Resolution, it was an important move in that it began to advocate remedies in <u>structural</u> terms rather than in terms of ameliorative readjustment within the system. This is

sometimes an unclear distinction; does steeply graduated taxation, for instance, effect a structural change or does it not? However there is clearly a difference of principle between "the adjustment of relations between employers and workmen" and "the nationalisation of key industries". Extracts from the Karachi and Lucknow Resolutions are given below:

1931 Karachi Resolution on Fundamental Rights and the Economy.[12]

Taxation.

7. "The system of land tenure and revenue and rent shall be reformed and an equitable adjustment made of the burden on agricultural land, immediately giving relief to the smaller peasantry, by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them, and in the case of uneconomic holdings, exempting them from rent so long as necessary, with such relief as may be just and necessary to holders of small estates affected by such exemption or reduction in rent, and to the same end, imposing a graded tax on net incomes from land above a reasonable minimum."

Economic and Social Programme.

15. "The State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.

16. Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury, direct and indirect."

1936 Lucknow Resolution on the Agrarian Programme.[13]

"Congress is of the opinion that the most important and urgent problem of the country is the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry, funfamentally due to antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue systems, and intensified in recent years by the great slump in prices of agricultural produce. The final solution of this problem inevitably involves the removal of British imperialistic exploitation, a thorough change of...land tenure and revenue systems and a recognition by the State of its duty to provide work for the rural unemployed masses..."

These two resolutions provide an interesting, if somewhat pale, foreshadowing and echo of the C.S.P.'s 1934 Meerut declaration, which was much more outspoken, advocating as it did "The socialisation of all institutions of

production, distribution and exchange." In the agricultural sphere, it supported the "elimination of princes and landlords and all classes of exploiters without compensation " and "the redistribution of land amongst peasants and the liquidation of peasant indebtedness" (Singh 1959: 29).

Reasons for the change of emphasis in Congress policy. Looked at in relation to the C.S.P's programme then, the Congress resolutions look fairly mild, but they undoubtedly represent a change of direction. This was the product of a combination of forces. First, there was the general quickening of interest and sympathy for economic problems and grievances in the era of the Depression, which made it increasingly clear to many that measures such as khaddar, could not permanently alleviate such basic distress. Furthermore, economic demands began to be formulated in more specific terms by bodies such as the C.S.P. and the A.I.K.S., and Congress was dragged in a leftwards direction in an effort not to be shorn of large segments of support or potential support. In this it was largely unsuccessful since the main body of Congress was unwilling to make more than token gestures of sympathy. Any more concrete moves such as the proposed group affiliation of T.U.'s and peasant organisations smelt too much of a take-over bid to meet the

approval of the Congress right wing. But Congress was nevertheless left with the trappings of these left-wing gestures, pioneered mainly by Nehru.

There was indeed strong resentment of these tendencies, as the 1936 letter of threatened resignation from the Working Committee by Prasad, Rajagopalachari, Doulatram, Bajaj, Patel, Kripalani and Dev indicates. "We feel", they wrote "that the preaching and emphasising of socialism particularly at this stage by the President and other socialist members of the Working Committee while the Congress has not adopted it is prejudicial to the best interests of the country....We feel....that the Congress should still follow the ideals and the line of action and policy which it has been following since 1920 and which we consider to be best suited to our country particularly in the present conditions and which have already shown great results." In a second letter they added; "you have been acting more as the mouthpiece of the minority of our colleagues on the Working Committee as also in the Congress than as the mouthpiece of the majority which we expected you as Congress President to do" (Norman 1965 I: 454-5).

The 1930's then, brought the beginning of a face-to-face confrontation of differing economic and social theories

within Congress. Until then, the debate about economic policy had been sufficiently embryonic, vague and peripheral to the main impetus of the national movement for it to avoid becoming a controversial issue. The C.P.I. had remained quite separate and had not tried to infiltrate into Congress, so there was no take-over bid for Congress policy from that direction. There had been some early signs of differences of opinion, as for example between Nehru and Gandhi, but these had been conducted as it were on the side lines and between individuals. It was the economic climate of the 1930's and the emergence of the C.S.P. that brought the debate within the era of Congress.

The last ten or so years before Independence was thus, from the point of view of Congress ideas on domestic policy, a period of more overt confrontation than any previous decade. By the time of Independence this had widened the scope of proposed policy, but it had also high-lighted a series of unresolved conflicts and given birth to a kind of pluralism of thought which issued sometimes in compromise, but at other times in contradiction. To some extent this was masked by the apparent single-mindedness of Congress resolutions, but sometimes even these were obvious attempts to encompass varying view-points.

It is therefore easiest to look at this period in retrospect, rather than trying to trace the developments chronologically. What mattered from the point of view of future policy was "the state of the parties" within the Congress doctrinal debate at the point of Independence. It will emerge that the tensions which were evident on the broad policy front were reflected also in attitudes to the specific problem of agrarian policy.

Reasons for Congress's plurality of policy commitments by 1947. There would seem to be at least four characteristics of the Congress debate about domestic policy in this last decade. First, there was the apparent shift in terms of official policy resolutions towards the acceptance of what sounded like explicitly socialist measures. Secondly, this was undoubtedly accompanied by some degree of continued support for Gandhian economic and social policies. To assess quite how widespread this was would require a detailed analysis of the various segments of Congress and national opinion during the period, but it is clear that such forces were strong enough to exert sufficient pressure on official policy for the pluralism of thought to appear not only lower down in the echolons but at this higher level also.

There are two other factors which it seems feasible to

suggest were influential during this decade, and which reinforced each other. First there was the beginning of a premonition on the part of the business community in particular, that the industrial growth which it was hoped would follow Independence would itself require or even engender new administrative and organisational patterns; in other words, the emergence of support for the whole ethos of rationalisation and co-ordination which, it can be argued, is the necessary concommitant of large-scale industrial growth.

This is a point of major importance, for it may be that this development foreshadowed the tendency after Independence for the whole socialist debate to be swallowed up and certainly blurred by a diffusion of attitudes which were themselves more the product of the modern industrial growth-oriented society and its offspring the welfare state, than of "pure" adherence to socialist ideology. This state of society seems to be one in which the persistence of capitalism leads not, as Marx envisaged, to its own demise via immiseration and class-consciousness on the part of the proletariat, but leads rather, admittedly via its own modification, to a certain degree of redistribution of income and improvement of living standards and the evolution

of a new ethos of welfare-equality which is sufficient in itself to obviate strongclass consciousness and an attack on the capitalist system per se. If this is the case, it means that Marx underestimated the flexibility and adaptability of capitalism and the capitalist. The relevant point here is that attitudes and attributes which might at first sight be regarded as socialistic may appear almost autonomously in the modern industrial state.

This is not just socialism in its non-doctrinaire, or as Apter puts it, its "set of unified development goals" form, for it describes an attitude which may even be manifested by people who deny that they are socialists.[14] It is nearer, in fact, to what Apter calls "the ideology of science", since it appeals to the values of pragmatism and efficiency, but tempers them with a regard for social welfare.

The case can be overstated and it is certainly true that the development of central planning and the welfare state, as against laissez-faire and free enterprise, is very much a matter of degree, as the case of Pakistan illustrates. However, it seems that India is located towards the other end of the spectrum in this respect. It remains to be seen from the post-Independence period to what extent this is

attributable to the acceptance of notions about the need for rationalisation and co-ordination in the modern industrial state, rather than to a commitment to socialist goals and methods. To the extent that it is the former, it is more likely that such attitudes will be open to revision in the light of experience, since they are motivated more by an interest in pragmatic economic efficiency in terms of growth, productivity and expansion, than by zealous adherence to ideology.

A final influence at work on Congress policy before Independence was almost certainly the War. If a "premonition of rationalisation" did in fact gain ground in the 1930's and early 1940's, it must have been reinforced by the war period, with its rapid growth of industry and the stimulus which this gave towards central co-ordination and control.

The policies themselves.

General principles. The first and most noticeable feature of Congress domestic policy by 1947 was, then, the apparent shift which had taken place in the direction of explicitly socialist commitments, and this as compared not only with the Gandhian days of the 1920's but also as against the Karachi and Lucknow Resolutions. Already by 1938, only

two years after the Lucknow controversy, the National Planning Committee was calmly embarking on the task of drawing up a ten-year national plan, and the members of this body, set up at the instigation of Congress, were not only rarified academics and idealistic intellectuals,but "industrialists, financiers, economists, scientists, as well as representatives of the Trade Union Congress and the Village Industries Association." Furthermore, "the non-Congress provincial governments (Bengal, Punjab and Sind) as well as some of the major states (Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Travancore, Bhopal) cooperated with the committee" (Nehru 1946: 336). Twenty-nine sub-committees were appointed by the main Committee, eight of these being for agricultural problems, several concerned with industry, five for commerce, and finance, two for transport, two for education, two for public welfare, two for demographic relations, and one for "woman's role in a planned economy". These sub-committees contained in all about 350 members (Nehru 1946: 341-2).

It was this variegated body which came to the conclusion that a large element of state intervention was required over a wide area, the focal point for this being the state's role in industry. As Nehru puts it, reporting not his own view, but the conclusions of the Committee, "The very essence of

this planning was a large measure of regulation and co-ordination. Thus while free enterprise was not ruled out as such, its scope was severely restricted. In regard to defence industries it was decided that these must be owned and controlled by the state. Regarding other key industries, the majority were of [the] opinion that they should be state-owned...Any planning would involve a close scrutiny of the development of industry in all its branches and a periodical survey of the progress made. It would mean also the training of the technical staffs necessary for the further expansion of industry" (Nehru 1946: 339-40).

Nehru goes on to say "We, or some of us at any rate, hoped to evolve a socialised system of credit. If banks, insurance etc. were not to be nationalised, they should at least be under the control of the state, thus leading to a state regulation of capital and credit. It was also desirable to control the export and import trade" (340).

All these declarations read as evidence that Congress at this stage and in terms of official policy, had entered the realm of what sounded like commitments to socialist-type aims, or at least aims which had been associated with socialism and moreover with the Marxist-social democratic, as opposed to the Gandhian end of the spectrum. With this tendency came the inevitable concomitant of policy-goals

formulated in terms more of ideological blueprints and slogans, than in terms of concrete organisation. The characteristics which had belonged to the parties of the left, the C.P.I. and the C.S.P. were now extended to Congress also.

The second feature of Congress policy in this period, that of the continuation of a commitment to Gandhian economic and social goals in some quarters, had two immediate results. It led, on the one hand, to some attempts actually to unite the two types of recipes, to evolve policies which would reconcile the apparently conflicting aims. On the other hand it reinforced the likelihood, evident for many other reasons, that social democratic methods would be employed to implement the socialist goals which were accepted, and this, as pointed out earlier, might well open the way for a feed-back onto and a tempering of the original goals themselves.

The most obvious attempt to reconcile Gandhian policies with the official line was in terms of the large-scale versus small-scale industry argument. Gandhi had always stood for small-scale village industry. He was antagonistic to the vision of large-scale heavy industry and the necessity this would create for factory employment and urban living. As Nehru points out, this attitude was rooted in a particular

kind of anger against inequality. The "vast difference between the few rich and the poverty-stricken masses seemed to him to be due to two principal causes: foreign rule and the exploitation that accompanied it, and the capitalist industrial civilisation of the West as embodied in the big machine. He reacted against both. He looked back with yearning to the days of the old autonomous and more-or-less self-contained village community where there had been an automatic balance between production, distribution and consumption; where political or economic power was spread out and not concentrated as it is today; where a kind of simple democracy prevailed; where the evils of great cities were absent and people lived in contact with the life-giving soil and breathed the pure air of the open spaces" (Nehru 1946: 345).

Again, this was not just an exaggeration of Gandhi's attitude on Nehru's part. As late as Oct. 1945, Gandhi wrote; "Crowds of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth. I hold that without truth and non-violence there can be nothing but destruction for humanity. We can realise truth and non-violence only in the simplification of village life and this

simplification can best be found in the Charka and all that the Charka connotes" (Norman 1965 II: 178). And again. "No one can or should ride on another's back. If we try to work out the necessary conditions for such a life, we are forced to the conclusion that the unit of society should be a village, or call it a small and manageable group of people who would, in the ideal, be self-sufficient (in the matter of their vital requirements) as a unit and bound together in bonds of mutual cooperation and inter-dependence"(Nehru 1958b: 496).

These statements were made in the context of a correspondence between Gandhi and Nehru which attempted to resolve or clarify their differences, and Nehru was intent on making the incompatible elements of their attitudes evident. In reply to Gandhi, he wrote, "it seems to me inevitable that modern means of transport as well as many other modern developments must continue to be developed. There is no way out of it except to have them. If that is so, inevitably a measure of heavy industry exists. How far (will that) fit in with a purely village society?...If two types of economy exist in the country there should be either conflict between the two or one will overwhelm the other" (Norman 1965 II: 17 9).

But at the official level, these contradictions were made less apparent. The motive behind the setting up of the N.P.C., for example, was that "as a step towards...industrialisation, a comprehensive scheme of national planning should be formulated." But this scheme was to provide for "the development of heavy key industries, medium scale industries and cottage industries" (Nehru 1946: 337). From the pure Gandhian point of view of course, the admission of such variety in itself was a major compromise, but the main point is that the N.P.C. as a body chose to see no conflict between the various proposed scales of industry. Nehru in fact was later driven either to explain away Congress's commitment to cottage industry as a temporary expedient pending the coming of Independence and the emergence of a national government which was free to undertake large-scale industrialisation,[15] or, as he had done in the past, to justify the adherence to cottage industry with reference to the Chinese example and on economic grounds, which meant that "it would be more profitable to use more labour power and less specialised machinery" since "it is better to find employment for large numbers of people at a low income level than to keep most of them unemployed." "The experience of China", he wrote, "is of inestimable value to us, and I

am sure we can learn much from it" (Norman 1965 II: 113). In the long term, however, these elements were not so easily reconciled, as the influence of the small-scale industry lobby and the resistance to centralised industry, has shown.[16]

The other influence of Gandhian ideas, the reinforcing of a reliance on voluntaristic, consensual or social democratic methods, and the effect which this in turn was liable to have on the actual political goals themselves, is illustrated by the attitude to private enterprise. The N.P.C. clearly committed itself to the nationalisation of "key industries", a commitment specifically reaffirmed by Congress's announcement immediately after Independence of its proclaimed goal of "a socialist democracy in India" (Cong. Bull. 1947: 16-21), but considerable room was left for the operation of free enterprise in that "in regard to other important and vital industries, no special rule was laid down", although "cooperative ownership and control were also suggested for industries." Finally, in all the commitment to nationalisation and control, there was inevitably a large evasion of the problem of <u>how</u> the transfer of ownership and the continuing control were to be effected in the face of possible resistance. It was on the whole assumed that voluntary cooperation would be forthcoming.

Agrarian policy. It remains to be seen how these multiple impulses and influences had affected Congress policy on agriculture by Independence.

First and foremost, the tendency towards the acceptance of socialist slogans, combined with the growth in receptivity towards central planning and co-ordination, had led to an extension of the nationalisation argument to land. As Nehru puts it, "the original idea behind the Planning Committee had been to further industrialisation...But no planning could possibly ignore agriculture, which was the mainstay of the people" (1946: 337). The N.P.C. accordingly reached the somewhat startling conclusion that "Agricultural land, mines, quarries, rivers and forests are forms of national wealth,ownership of which must vest absolutely in the people of India collectively", and "the cooperative principle should be applied to the exploitation of land by developing collective and cooperative farms" (340). The N.P.C.'s position on agriculture was, in terms of socialist doctrine, apparently a good deal more radical than its attitude to industry. In laying down that "no intermediary of the type of talukdars, zamindars, etc. should be recognised after the transition period was over," the N.P.C. was in effect declaring that all land should by right vest in the state

and no private leasing was to be allowed.

But once again the policy of this blueprint level sounded infinitely more radical than it was at the time in many quarters actually conceived to be, and certainly more radical than it has proved to be in the event. Both the influence of zamindars within Congress and the influence of Gandhian ideas on trusteeship combined to recommend a comparatively respectful treatment of the zamindars. The logic of Gandhi's trusteeship notion, namely that the possession of property and wealth was a trust that should be administered for the communal good, was really against abolition altogether. In 1934, addressing a deputation of large zamindars he is reported to have said "I shall be no party to dispossessing propertied classes of their private property without just cause. My object is to reach your hearts and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare"(Nehru 1958: 325). But assuming that abolition was in fact decided upon, the logical conclusion was that the ownership of property should be justly recognised by means of compensation, and this accorded well with a social democratic desire to secure the voluntary cooperation of vested interests. As Nehru

wrote in "Towards Freedom", "Even talukdars and zamindars would welcome an end of the system, provided, of course, they got sufficient compensation therefore " (1958: 295).

Accordingly, Congress never advocated abolition without compensation. Nehru puts his finer on this essential general difficulty of what amounts to the "buying out" of vested interests; "Such a change" ("the establishment of a socialist order...with a controlled production and distribution of wealth for the public good") "may partly be forced or expedited by world conditions, but it can hardly take place without the willing consent or acquiescence of the great majority of the people concerned. They have therefore to be converted and won over to it... Naturally efforts must be made to win over even those who profit by the existing system, but it is highly unlikely that any large percentage of them will be converted" (322). The implication of these remarks is that such interests will finally have to be bribed to conform.

As with the industrial policy, the vision of agrarian change continued to operate on a dual plane, at one level paying official court to large-scale collectivisation or co-operativisation, and at another relying heavily on the ideas of village self-sufficiency and self-help, which

were later to be embodied in the Community Development programme. The general movement of opinion in favour of national coordination and even planning created a willingness to accept the notion of state intervention in the rural sector, but the manifest ambivalence between planning as an instrument of economic efficiency and planning as an ideological tool, left open the whole question of precisely what the nature of rural organisation was to be. Socialist slogans pointed to communal ownership of some variety, Gandhian values pointed to peasant proprietorship or even tenancy but with some sort of cooperative infrastructure, and it was not clear where economic efficiency criteria pointed, since virtually no research had been done on the relative merits, in terms of productivity, as between tenancy, proprietorship or co-operatively-owned cultivation.

Moreover, since planning was as yet such a vague concept, and since the motives for its advocacy were considerably mixed, it was highly unclear how the whole rural sector was to be integrated into the national economy. The galaxy of problems concerned with the relative priorities of industrial and agricultural production, and the possibility of draining off a rural surplus to subsidise industrial development; could hardly be dealt with or even conceived, in the context

of 1938 or the years immediately after. But the conflicts and difficulties created by these ambiguities of commitment as between the various schools of socialist and non-socialist thought within Congress, were to become amply evident after Independence. The years after Independence brought exigencies of their own, but they also highlighted these earlier ambivalences and vaguenesses.

Conclusion: socialism and its role.

In general, then, it seems too simple to describe socialism as either nationalism converted into a concrete recipe for development, or as an ideological theme which necessarily subserved the same unifying and solidarity-promoting functions as nationalism appeared to do. These aspects may well apply much more aptly to socialism as employed by an independent government faced with concrete organisational problems. They draw attention to the manipulative and mobilisational aspects of ideology. Insofar as the role of Congress as an organised movement with specific goals did affect the nature of ideological tendencies in the pre-Independence period, the main product seemed to be a tactical placing of emphasis on the need for unity, and therefore, a playing down or a resisting of

emergent socialism. Internal conflicts and the future division of domestic resources were problems which were constantly being pushes into the background. That socialist-sounding doctrines did emerge at all was certainly due partly to the increasing imminence of Independence and the consequent need to face precisely these problems. But it was also due to the divisions of interest and more strident demands which were beginning to become evident within Congress during the 1930's and which presented a challenge to the traditional nationalist emphasis on unity. If socialism did not become manifestly divisive or conflict-producing in this period, this was mainly because the impetus of nationalism continued to predominate, rather than because socialism inherited its unity-promoting role. But the divided nature of socialist counsels themselves, together with the ambiguities of policy-intentions produced by the conflict between socialist, Gandhian and conservative elements in Congress, all gave evidence of probable future conflict in the period after Independence, and it is with this period that the subsequent chapters will be concerned.

NOTES. Chapter 3.

1. The case of Tanzania is an interesting one. The T.A.N.U. "Creed" and the Arusha Declaration of 1967 do set forth specific economic tenets in that they describe one of the principal aims of the party as being "to see that the Government exercises effective control over the principal means of production and pursues policies which facilitate the way to collective ownership of the resources of this country." (j) But this socialist creed also contains the objective "To cooperate with all political parties in Africa engaged in the liberation of all Africa" (d), and "To see that the Government cooperates with other States in Africa in bringing about African Unity." (k). The economic policy advocated is also heavily geared to the goal of achieving self-reliance through renouncing foreign aid, for "Independence cannot be real if a Nation depends upon gifts and loans from another for its development."

2. In 1962, for example, Indian Finance wrote that "The Swatantra Party has travelled a long way since the days when Planning was anathema to its founding fathers. Since then, the Party has learnt at the hustings that a Plan for economic development is an essential ingredient of an

election manifesto" (Sep. 8th, 1962). This remark was provoked by Swatantra's setting up a Working Group under Lobo Prabhu, of the Forum for Free Enterprise, to draw up a "counterblast to the 3rd Five Year Plan." But the "plan" in fact included such measures as greater freedom for private enterprise, tax reduction, and the denationalising of state enterprises.

3. The Communist Party had no doubts about the political complexion of Gandhism. As Overstreet and Windmiller put it, "Gandhism was both theoretically reactionary and tactically menacing to the Communists" (1951: 509). The only doubt lay in identifying Gandhi's class affiliation. In 1929, a Russian Encyclopaedia, (citing M.N. Roy and Palme Dutt), referred to Gandhi as a "spokesman of petty- bourgeois ideology" (513). But an article in 'Communist International' in 1933 stated that "Gandhism... is the philosophy of the bourgeoisie and the landlords" (514).

4. Initially the C.P.I., and particularly Roy, actually took a more purist line than Moscow. In 1920, Lenin's draft on colonial policy for the 2nd Congress of the Comintern referred to"the necessity of all Communist Parties to render assistance to the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in such countries", whilst Roy's view was reported

as being that "the Communist Party of India must devote itself exclusively to the organisation of the broad popular masses for the struggle for the class interests of the latter " (Overstreet and Windmiller 1959: 28). In 1928, however, the outlooks converged when the Report on the colonies at the 6th Comintern Congress spoke of the "national reformist" and the anti-proletarian policy of the Indian bourgeoisie. When the Comintern again changed course in 1935, under the threat of German fascism, the C.P.I. this time conformed with Moscow's view and supported bourgeois collaboration and infiltration.

5. See: Chapter 4 below.

6. Morris-Jones suggests that in Narayan's later position, "Marx, Rousseau and Ghandi are all discernible as influences" (1964: 215). Narayan's vision of the remodelled political society is described in his booklet 'A plea for reconstruction of Indian polity.' "The foundation of this polity," he says, "...must necessarily be self-governing, self-sufficient, agro-industrial, urbo-rural, local communities" (85).

7. However in 1962, in discussing whether Swatantra was aptly described as a conservative party, Masani said: "I think a more accurate description of the Party would be to say it is liberal and Gandhian. The policy of minimum government and of maximum individual liberty comes directly

from Gandhiji's teaching" (Masani 1962: 10).

8. The P.S.P. itself instituted a rural work programme with the slogan "Ek Ghanta Desh Ko", which advocated helping villagers build roads, bunds, wells, etc., and also held a Village Reconstruction Conference in Bihar in February, 1957. But, "ever since the birth of the C.S.P., the Marxist majority in the Party had regarded the constructive village programme of Mahatma Gandhi as essentially "reactionary".. they were quite opposed to the adoption of Gandhian techniques, because they regarded them as basically non-socialist in character"(Singh 1951: 110).

9. Overstreet and Windmiller quote an "Open letter to Indian youth, workers and peasants" which was published in the Soviet paper, 'Imprecor' in 1930, which stated that "the National Congress...actually retards the revolutionary movement" (140).

10. In a letter to Gandhi, Nehru wrote "my approach, mild and vague as it was, is considered dangerous and harmful by my colleagues. I was even told that my laying stress on the poverty and unemployment in India was unwise... Presumably the result of this will be that I shall retire and a more homogeneous committee will be formed" (Norman 1965 I: 459).

11. From a statement of 1924, by R.C. Das and Motilal Nehru (Sitaramayya 1935: 462).

12. The Karachi Resolution is quoted in full in Norman 1965 Vol.1; 248-251.

13. Quoted in Nehru 1941: 408-9.

14. V.K. Narasimhan represents this position well. "If we substitute for the word 'socialism', 'mass welfare', it is easy to see that the combination of technology and democracy has transformed almost all the Western democracies into Welfare States....Even more significant is the built-in march toward greater equality that is inherent in a society in which mass production is intimately linked up with mass consumption." (19). He goes on to suggest of the Indian case particularly, "it is clear that the complexity of a modern technological economy does call for a good deal of social regulation." But "much more perhaps than state regulation what we shall be needing in an increasingly complex economy is what Gandhiji advocated as the principle of trusteeship."

15. Nehru is quoted by Hanson as arguing to the N.P.C. that "Congress considered it unnecessary to push large-scale industries through its organisation and left this to the state as well as to their own resources...Now that the Congress is to some extent, identifying itself with the state, it cannot

ignore the question of establishing and encouraging large-scale industries" (1966: 33).

16. For evidence of this, see Chapter 5, note 12 below.

CHAPTER 4

Ideology and policy in the first period after Independence

1947 was, from any point of view, a crucial landmark in India's development. In terms of self-government the dividing-line was admittedly somewhat blurred since what had really taken place was a protracted process rather than one single event: a process which extended from the early reforms to the election of provincial governments and finally to the Interim and then the fully independent National Government. Even so, the actual event of Independence was a crucial divide, not least in terms of the development of ideology. This was the psychological moment, the fulfilment of the ambition which had been Congress's one dominant and professed goal. Independence removed at the same time both the immediate driving force for Congress as a political organ, and the main focus of opposition. All the domestic policy issues which had perforce been regarded as peripheral, even though some groups and individuals had attempted to make them less so, became central and imperative. It is important to consider how this "shock" affected the nature and role of ideology.

The complementarity of the various theories of ideology.

The effect of looking at the main pre-Independence areas of ideological debate, has been to suggest, or perhaps to confirm, that none of the individual explanatory approaches to ideology specified in Chapter I, can serve to provide an adequate coverage of the changing nature and role of ideology and its relation to policy intentions in the various phases of Congress development. Social psychological theories are useful in helping to account for the appeal of nationalism in specific situations. But they are vague about the boundaries at which nationalist sentiments will settle, and they can hardly bring any evidence to bear, either for or against, in the debate about nationalism as a possible vehicle for elite ambitions. With this level of possibility interest theory deals well, and it certainly produces concrete suggestions about the relation of class interest to successive phases of Indian nationalism. But it, in turn, fails to account for the nature of Congress as a strategic movement and for the subtler influences which tactical considerations might have exercised. Again, this is something which functional social psychological theories do hint at, for, as in Apter's account, they tend to stress the effects of ideology, perhaps at the expense of its content. This, however, seems an inadequate approach without an elaboration of the manipulative aspects of ideology, which

turns attention back again to power theories.

Combinations of theories, and ideal-types. It thus becomes apparent that these various approaches, far from being mutually-exclusive rivals, may more often be complementary. They may represent many aspects of the total situation or they may be dissected and their constituent elements combined to produce ideal-types for the phases of a society's development over time. At one stage, for instance, it may be most appropriate to think of the going body of ideology as the sum of demands being made on a central authority. In such a situation, there will be secondary aspects of ideology to be investigated, such as the degree of its cohesive effects, the interest content of the demands made, and the way in which the demands themselves may be modified by being linked to the goal-oriented strategy of an organisation or movement. Schurmann, in his study of ideology in China, suggests that "there are ideologies of organisation in addition to those of classes and individuals." He goes on to argue that organisations as such "must have a body of ideas that is explicitly goal-oriented and teleological", and that organisational ideology is "a systematic set of ideas with action consequences serving the purpose of creating and using organisations" (1966: 18-9). This may

apply to governments, considered as organisations, but it applies particularly to movements with specific strategies and aims whose ideologies themselves constitute a set of demands on the central authority.

At another stage of historical development, however, circumstances may arise such that the central authority becomes more powerful and itself could be described as dominating the situation through its role as a generator or disseminator of ideology, and hence as an imposer of policy on the nation at large. This is the kind of configuration of influences which becomes a possibility in the Indian context after Independence. Whether or not such a situation can be said to have actually materialised must be the subject-matter of this chapter and the next.

Finally, at some stages and in some conditions, a national polity may be most adequately described as a bargaining ground for interest groups with ideological formulations expressing the interests of each. In this situation, as in the previous one, a major secondary consideration will be the way in which the nature and the current role of ideology, and particularly of "embedded ideology" or "basic political norms" in Apter's sense, sets constraints on the range of possible policy decisions.

This serves to stress the point that the role of

ideology itself must be borne in mind even whilst substantive ideological themes are being examined for the light which they throw on the conflicts and uncertainties which occurred within Congress, both vis à vis its own goals and in relation to the rest of the country. Each phase of political development and policy formation, both before and after Independence, includes ideology as an active ingredient, whether more as cause or product remains to be decided.

The State of Congress Ideology at Independence.

To return then, to the substance of ideological debate and conflict at Independence: the broad themes of nationalism, socialism and Gandhism have served to identify particular ranges of political issues and the problems which they raised, in relation especially to agrarian policy. These issues can now be summarised before attention is turned to post-Independence developments.

The main issue which was raised by the growth of nationalism was the difficult and recurrent one of whose interests were being served by the movement for Independence and in whose name self-government was being advocated. The origins of Congress clearly suggest that the earliest goal was the displacement of one elite, the colonial one, by another elite, the native

middle-class and educated one. From the 1920's on, there was an ostensible change in that the movement became more broadly-based, more socially inclusive and more popular in image. But the leadership continued to be firmly middle-class, and this was reflected in Congress attitudes over a range of issues; in its fear of being too firmly tied to the peasant movements and the Trade Unions, and in its reluctance to be drawn away from its traditional adherence to paternalistic welfare measures and into the dangerous waters of structural reform as applied to social and economic institutions.

A logical outcome of this situation was the emphasis on conciliation, national unity and a humanitarian populism which was the dominant note of Congress ideology before the C.S.P. began to make the socialist voice more trenchantly heard, and perhaps even after this too. Socialism or a quasi-socialism, did make inroads into Congress in the 1930's and 1940's but, insofar as it reached official policy level, it did so without ever explicitly facing the problem of basically conflicting interests which socialism necessarily implies. It seems to have been assumed for instance, that industry would be a fairly willing partner to a degree of central planning, whilst the main proposals for agrarian reform were in a sense a special case

since they were on the whole supported by the sentiments of nationalism itself, in that the zamindars had come to be identified as bastions of the colonial regime. Divergences of interest clearly existed, as the conflicts of the Kisan Sabhas with the Congress provincial ministries showed, but these remained fairly submerged and were increasingly masked in the 1940's both by the greater absorption of Congress energies in the concrete task of negotiating independence, and presumably also because explicit conflict became more and more cannalised into religious bitterness.[1.]

The issues brought into play by socialist debate then, were precisely those from which nationalism tended to distract attention, namely the whole problem of how society and its institutions were to be reformed when independence was achieved, and how much redistribution of property, if any, was to be attempted. Within the compass of socialist thought there was the inevitable divergence of views about what remedies should be applied and by what methods, the more humanitarian, gradualist and social democratic being at odds with the more extreme and doctrinaire. This divide in turn drew attention to the fact that the more left-wing socialist groups, and this applied to Congress insofar as it accepted

relatively left-wing measures, could only formulate plans in broad slogan terms, whilst smaller-scale less radical policies, such as the humanitarian Gandhian ones, could begin to be implemented in the immediate situation. Again, the formulation of socialist policies was further complicated or confused by the persistence of support for Gandhian economic ideas, and the necessity this created for an attempt to amalgamate the two types of policies.

Finally, the emergence of apparently socialist attitudes in Congress was certainly influenced by a growing desire for economic development, especially as this became more emphatically a part of the vocabulary of international prestige. What has here been called a "premonition of rationalisation", which implied on the part of industry a willingness to consider techniques of planning, was not necessarily a commitment to socialism, but rather the beginnings of a search for the best recipe for economic growth.

Possible future developments. These then are the issues which came within the compass of these ideological debates, and they describe some of the ambiguities, uncertainties and inconsistencies which were a feature of declared Congress policy at the time of Independence. The questions

which they suggest as being crucial to the course of events after 1947 are, first of all, what would happen to the relative unity which had prevailed within Congress; was it likely that Independence would bring a splaying out of interests and a new vociferousness of interest groups, whether on a class, occupational or regional basis? Since Independence represented the final withdrawal of an old elite, and the consequent availability of positions of authority and control of resources, was a greater clamour of sectional claims to be expected?

The second suggested query would seem to be, what would happen to the official, but vague socialistic Congress policy plans when the party was faced with the concrete exigencies of government? On the one hand, could the more doctrinaire commitments be translated into legislation, and, on the other, could the alliance between these and the more Gandhian-influenced ideas, continue to seem viable?

Finally, to what extent would the formulation of policy be affected by the whole paraphernalia of economic techniques and the need for rational co-ordination in an industrial society? Would the arena of economics, both academic and applied, infiltrate its own value premises into policy-making, or would economics merely provide another level, an extension of the ideological one, at

which the same kinds of conflicts could be fought out?

If these are the questions which raise themselves most obviously in the context of the transition to independence, and in the light of the path by which Independence had been reached, it is clear that the answers to them must be inter-related ones. They deal with a series of connected variables. For instance, the ambiguities and shifts in content of official policy will clearly be dependent to some extent on the strength of pressure groups and hence their ability to forestall or dilute unwelcome legislation. But the strength of such groups will itself be affected by the relative security and unity of the Government and its consequent ability to take initiatives. At this point the ability of the Government to use ideology as a tool for ordering priorities and even redefining situations may be very important, though it must be noticed that the degree and intensity of the Government's "output" of ideology is not necessarily an index of its real ability to impose priorities in this way. In some circumstances, a frenzy of ideological profession may indicate a position of defensiveness and weakness, an attempt to cling to professed but threatened goals which manifests itself in "protesting too much". So we may expect to find feed-backs and chain reactions between

the relative strengths of Government and interest groups, which will both affect the explicit ideology and also itself be expressed through ideological debates.

Congress, ideology and policy after Independence: three phases

As noted earlier, by the mid-40's Congress had arrived at a position in which it was relatively identified with socialistic policies. Against resistance from the right wing and against the primary impetus of Congress as a movement, commitments had been made to tenets of domestic policy which were not merely describable as necessary outcomes of the nationalistic movement as such. This had come about mainly at the initiative of the C.S.P. and Nehru, who themselves certainly did see a close connection between socialism and the fight against colonialism. Nevertheless, whatever the causes, the Congress domestic policy position by Independence was apparently a relatively doctrinaire one, committed as it was to central planning, nationalisation, zamindari abolition and land reform. The fate of these policy commitments and the fate of Congress as an initiator of policy must be examined in relation to the inter-related factors mentioned above.

From this point of view, the post-Independence period seems to fall naturally into three phases, the first extending to the mid-50's and in which a multitude of factors conspired to sap the Government's initiative

fairly drastically. The pressure of external circumstances served to reinforce the inhibiting factors within Congress, in terms of policy ambivalence and factional disunity, and the whole period was consequently somewhat of a holding operation. This is not to say that there were not large areas of Government legislative initiative and reorganisation. There certainly were, but those measures which won through had, as it were, to be filtered through various nets before they emerged. In some ways this was less crucial for agriculture than for industry, since more innovations could be made in the rural sector without irrevocable long-term commitments. In other words, the first stages of land reform could be embarked on, and obviously remedial steps could be taken, without this involving a firm commitment to long-term aims. This was in general less true of industry.

The mid-50's presents itself as the beginning of another phase, because it was at this point that there was an apparent upsurge in Congress's ideological determination or initiative; a new spurt of socialism was explicitly injected into policy statements and seemed to find its way into actual policy, most noticeably in the 2nd Plan, the 1955-56 Budget[2] and the 2nd Industrial Policy Resolution. To what ...

extent this represented a real shift in Congress policy emphasis is perhaps debatable, but it certainly looked like one, and was taken as such by potentially dissident elements both inside and outside Congress. By 1959 and the Nagpur Resolution on co-operative farming, such elements were ready to make the apparent increase of applied socialism in Government policy the immediate justification for attempting to gather together a new and more cogent opposition.

This in turn can be held to mark the beginning of a phase leading to the electoral decline of the 1960's, during which Congress has been put back firmly onto the defensive. Again, external events have played their part and have certainly contributed to the grind-down in the impetus of planning and the still-birth of the 4th Plan. But the fanning out of interests has also played its part. From here onwards this chapter will be concerned with the first phase after Independence. The next chapter will deal with the second and third phases.

Congress, ideology and industry up to 1955.

These three phases may be cited as marking the rise and fall in Congress strength and fortunes. They also seem important from the point of view of the course of policy in both the agricultural and the industrial sectors. A brief

survey of industrial policy will serve to sketch in the background against which agrarian developments occurred.

As far as industry was concerned, the two major events in this first period were the industrial policy announced in 1948, and, in 1950, the setting up of the Planning Commission, followed in the next two years by the 5-year Plan Outline. The main characteristic of these two moves was that neither represented a really large-scale or radical step, as compared with the type and scope of policy to which Congress was apparently committed at Independence. Since as early as 1931, it had been pledged to a policy of state ownership or control of key industries, and in the immediate post-Independence situation of January, 1948, the Economic Programme Committee of Congress set down the general lines of recommended policy. This was to include the nationalisation of public utilities and all defence and key industries, the public ownership of monopolies, the dismantling of the management agencies, and a maximum profit on venture capital of 5% (Charka II, 4: 3).

But when the Government's policy was actually announced in April of the same year, it turned out to be a very pale reflection of these principles. Only three industries were to be publicly owned; munitions, atomic energy and railways. In six others the Government

reserved the right to undertake new investment, but the existing plant was to remain free from government control. Nationalisation was to be postponed for at least ten years, and as the Hindustan Times reported, "the rest of the industrial field will normally be left open to private enterprise" (Hindustan Times, 8th April, 1948).

At this point, Nehru developed a theory of what Brecher calls "socialisation of the vacuum" (1959: 512), according to which state initiative would be taken in areas as yet unexploited by private enterprise. This could be justified by arguing that such areas were likely to be ones in which private and social benefit and incentives did not tally since the profit margin might be initially low and the pay-off period lengthy. But radicals both in and out of Congress were intensely disappointed with the minimalness of the reorganisation and with what they regarded as the sweeping concessions to private enterprise[3].

Congress's commitment to planning did not begin to be implemented until 1950, and then partly under the influence of a report by Nehru's personal economic adviser of the time, an American, Solomon Trone. The setting up of the actual machinery of planning was a very important achievement, creating a considerable potential for the future, but the first Plan itself was not very

ambitious. It was of fairly small proportions and certainly did not concentrate on heavy industry. It was in fact "hardly a plan" but more "an amalgam of specific projects" (Brecher 1959: 521).

Constraints on policy. Why then was there this immediately obvious and somewhat blatant contrast between the policy pronouncements before and after Independence, and the policies pursued up to the mid-50's? The hesitancy and moderation of policy is in many ways not surprising, given the events of these years. It would perhaps have been more unexpected had the Government succeeded in approaching more closely the pre-Independence plans. The initial catastrophe, against which the Industrial Policy of 1948 was formulated, was the chaos and violence of Partition and the rioting and mass migration which followed. This in turn was succeeded by the Kashmir dispute. The period of 1947 to 1949 was inevitably a time of threatened economic crisis, when fears began to mount that a false step could send the economy totally out of balance.

So the political and resource constraints were very real ones. For instance, Brecher suggests that one obvious reason why more widespread nationalisation was impossible was solely the non-availability of an

adequate bureaucratic framework and the requisite number of trained personnel (1959: 11-2). But there were other constraints besides the turmoil created by Partition and the scarcity of resources, constraints which were located more obviously within Congress itself. First, there was the old ambivalence about methods, compounded of a social democratic belief in voluntarism, and a Gandhian emphasis on conciliation, both ideological elements which were obvious candidates for natural selection in a situation which reduced the power of the Government to introduce major changes anyway. Congress's declarations in support of nationalisation had not included clauses about how this was to be achieved in the face of resistance. When it came to the point, this meant there was hardly a real choice to be made between commandeering industry or adopting a gradualist and compromise approach, quite apart from the exigencies of the national situation.

As for Gandhian conciliation, the incident of the 1947 price controls was a revealing one. The Commodity Prices Board, which included the well-known economist Prof. Gadgil, recommended the retention of controls on food and other essential consumer goods as a vital preventive measure against runaway inflation. However,

voices within industry strongly contested this policy, and Gandhi swayed the argument in their favour by pronouncing that Cabinet Ministers should not assume greater knowledge than "those experienced men who do not happen to occupy ministerial chairs, but who hold the view strongly that the sooner the controls are removed, the better" (Karaka 1950: 220). The removal of controls did lead to spiralling inflation and in a few months the general price level rose by 30% (Brecher 1959: 510).

The battle over price controls highlights another element in the situation, namely the vociferousness of vested interests and, in particular, the business community. As Brecher puts it, "Independence brought to the fore myriad sectional interests which had been submerged in the communal struggle for freedom" (1959: 509). As suggested earlier in the context of nationalism the whole logic of the independence fight had tended to distract attention from the distributional problems of domestic politics.

Before Independence, industry had been relatively docile. A number of industrialists had cooperated with the National Planning Committee in its pre-War sittings and. though there had been no unanimity on basic principles,

a large element of government control over industry had been generally agreed. In 1944 moreover a group of industrialists had drawn up and published the Bombay Plan,[4] envisaging the development of large-scale industrialisation. However, this may be seen as an attempt to forestall socialistic central control rather than to anticipate it. It seems that industry, which had of course developed relatively rapidly during the War, only began to grapple with the prospect of state control when it became an immediate threat in the guise of Nehru's premiership and the feared onset of socialism. This manifested itself in a crisis of business confidence or a "strike of capital", which brought the economy to a standstill in the period before the announcement of the Government's Industrial Policy in 1948 (Brecher 1959: 510). The threat became evident that industry in the future was likely to use its sanctions in opposing any drastically socialist proposals, a situation which again could only have been circumvented by the impracticable strategy of a total Government takeover of the main industries.

The Congress right wing. Another aspect of this particular expression of sectional interests, and one which is typical of this first decade after Independence, was that opposition to Congress policies did not come from a formally separate

camp. Sardar Patel, then Home Minister, was a constant rival to Nehru during this period and frequently functioned as a spokesman for the business community. He had, for example, given full backing to the 1947 drive against price controls. In fact up to his death in 1950, he provided a general rallying point for the Congress right wing, and this in itself draws attention to a point of major importance for Congress policy during the period; many of the rightist elements which were later to realign themselves in Swatantra or the constellation of smaller parties which Swatantra progressively absorbed, were at this stage still contained within Congress. As Erdman says of the period before 1959, "We may ask those who emphasise the weakness of the Indian right, how many Conservative parties does India need? The contemporary Congress is quite enough to satisfy a good many Conservatives, and some of those whom it did not satisfy still remained in the party, paying lip service to socialism and boring from within, because of Nehru's commitment to socialist positions and because of the apparent futility of fighting him openly" (1967: 60-1).

The separate parties which did spring up in this period tended to be local and specific, and did not represent a general rallying of conservative forces. The one exception to this was perhaps the Jan Sangh, founded in 1951 by

S.P. Mookerjee, an ex-member of the cabinet. But its over-riding raison d'etre was the religious issue and Hindu nationalism. Its economic policy is in fact mixed and pragmatic, and it even advocates the nationalisation of key industries (Erdman 1967: 54.).[5] It aims at lower middle class support rather than the mass backing of industrial interests. But in any case its showing at the 1952 and 1957 elections indicated that it was not seriously siphoning off support from Congress[6] and it was certainly not a magnet for middle-of-the-road conservatives, but rather for religious extremists. It left a good segment of right wing opinion within the ranks of Congress.

The moderateness of the 1948 industrial policy was not the only evidence of the strength of the right wing. It manifested itself also in the debates on a range of issues, such as, for instance, the 1950 Hindu Code Bill, which was introduced by Nehru but seriously whittled away in the process of legislation. Erdman argues that the political complexion of later defectors from Congress is further evidence of the strength of the right. The left had made a major move of self-assertion in the 1930's and this was the basis for the emergence of the Praja Socialist Party and the final break with Congress in 1948. There were some slight moves towards reconvergence subsequently in the

form of the Ashok Mehta argument for coalition and reduced opposition,[7] but this proved to be a passing phase and did not affect the continuing distinctness and independence of the P.S.P. By contrast, there had been no such major exodus of right-wing opinion, and so the potential existed for a series of later rightist splinterings. In the first decade of Independence, however, such congeries of opinion remained entrenched within Congress, and this undoubtedly chipped away at Congress unanimity and dissipated much of the eagerness for implementing earlier policy statements.

Congress, ideology and the rural sector in the early 1950's.

The same kinds of situational constraints as were cited in the case of industrial policy had their effect also on the development of agrarian policy, thus reinforcing the impression that this period amounted more to a holding operation than to one in which coordinated strategy for the whole of the economy could be formulated. Any major rural reorganisation was put out of court in the immediate future by the disruption of Partition. As V.P. Pande says, of the 1952 scheme for community development, "The programme could hardly have been launched earlier as just after independence all the resources of the Government were mobilised for post-partition reconstruction, especially for the rehabilitation

of refugees from Pakistan. It was only in September, 1952, that the Central Minister in charge of Displaced Persons from Pakistan could say that the 'culminating task of rehabilitating the displaced persons has been reached'" (1967: 167). Furthermore, conditions of food shortage and inflation had continued up to and beyond the 1949 cease-fire in Kashmir, partly because of the effects on prices of the Korean War. This combination of factors could be cited as a deterrent against the launching of any major agrarian reform.

But once again, the difficult economic and military situation only served as a reinforcing factor for the ambiguities and imprecisions of Congress policy aims. The main points of commitment at Independence were to "a thorough revision of the system of land tenure" (1936 Lucknow Resolution), cooperative farming (Report of the N.P.C.), and the abolition of zamindari with partial compensation (1946 Election Manifesto). These were aims which had been acquired somewhat haphazardly and in response to a variety of pressures, rather than by a process of logical accumulation. The measures proposed were thus a mixture of extended traditional remedies and of new, more radical solutions. Zamindari abolition was ambivalent in this respect, in that it could partly be seen as fitting into the trend of earlier demands

and legislation, and partly as a completely new departure.

In the last decade before Independence, the trend of rural legislation, even under the Congress ministries, had still been very much in the remedial tradition, with the emphasis on rent control and increasing security of tenure. There was a sense in which zamindari abolition represented merely the ultimate degree of security of tenure since it meant that most holders would now become the direct and protected tenants of the state. In the context of the 1930's and 1940's therefore, all forms of peasant grievance seemed to lead eventually, by a kind of inevitable logic, to the ultimate demand for zamindari abolition. Grievance with the levels of rent, together with frustration at the lack of security and even the maldistribution of land, could all be pinned onto the zamindari system itself, and this was all the more effectively a point of focus because the modern system was directly attributable to the British. It could be argued that "the British system of 1772 onwards meant practically the farming out of not only the revenue, but also the land itself" and that "some writers have regarded this as amounting to the confiscation of the peasants' proprietary rights on a scale the world had never seen"(Driver 1949: 56). A final reason for the odium inspired by the zamindars as a class, or at least by the large zamindars, was the fact that

they were visible allies of the contemporary colonial regime.

But on the other hand, zamindari abolition could be justified as a component of a more radical approach in that it sought to undermine "feudal" power, and to remove the profit-making, or exploitation, potential of private property rights in land. In this light, it was more akin to the policy goals of land nationalisation, cooperativisation or even collectivisation, elements which derived their impetus from a rather different source and which fell into an ideological camp which was distinct from that of earlier legislation. Whereas rent control and tenure reform and even zamindari abolition could be classed as remedial-social-justice or humanitarian types of measure, the advocacy of cooperative, and to an even greater extent, collective, farming was a step into quite other territory, since it represented a solution in terms of a reorganisation of the whole institutional framework. Perhaps these were policies which were less ideologically specific than they at first seemed, since they could be advocated on the grounds of any one of the variations of socialist and Gandhian thought which were in evidence in India at the time. But it was nevertheless a type of policy which represented a break with the earlier trends of legislation and it was this element

in Congress policy which was therefore likely to provide the largest test of determination and consistency for the new Government, on the criterion of adherence to previous policy pledges. Cooperativeisation was to the agrarian sector as nationalisation was to the industrial. Would it therefore be the case that agrarian socialistic aims would issue in a compromise similar to that embodied in the 1948 industrial policy?

Continuation of ideological ambiguity. Oddly enough, there was a sense in which the pressures on the Government to honour its stated intentions in the agrarian sphere, were less intense than they had been in relation to industry. This may seem surprising since before Independence, Congress's attitude to agriculture had seemed, if anything, and at least in theory, more radical than its attitude to industry, and it therefore seemed to have set itself a more ambitious goal to be judged by. Although it was not at all clear what was meant by the phrase, Congress had advocated the "collective ownership" of all land, whereas never more than the nationalisation of key concerns had been advocated for industry. But the point is that pressures on the Government to reveal its hand in agrarian policy were arguably less great, for the major reason that the issues were less clear-cut, there being a much greater possibility

of dealing in short-term measures which were relatively open-ended and which would leave unresolved the final course of policy. The crucial question, as far as industry was concerned, was that of the locus of ownership and control, and the relative power positions of the private and public sectors. Because of the ideological build-up before Independence, the debate had come to be seen in terms of degrees of nationalisation. The Government had in practice attempted to retain its aim of widespread nationalisation as a long-term one, but because the target had been severely cut back in the short-term, and because a new theory of nationalisation, which really amounted to the acceptance of a mixed economy, had been put into currency, it was clear that an important de facto compromise had been made and that the lines of a possible future policy had already been laid down. The future extension of nationalisation and enlargement of the planning function did not really alter the basic principle of a mixed economy, with a large degree of state initiative, but with considerable power in the private sector also.

In agriculture, the case was very different, for the first issue with which the Government was pledged to deal was that of zamindari abolition, and this was precisely the kind of measure which carried no essential implications for future policy. It was intermediate between the two camps

of remedial humanitarian legislation and radical structural or institutional reform. As such, it allowed the ambiguity and plurality of Congress extant policy to project itself into the future. The only point of ideological import which could not be avoided was the method of implementation.

The question of compensation. This problem of compensation is a prime example of the meeting point of ideological rationalisation and concrete political constraint. Driver, writing in 1949, illustrates this well. On the one hand he argues that Congress "represents all the elements of our national life, the rich as well as the poor; and it would be just wishful thinking to expect it to throw overboard its commitments". Furthermore, "whilst others might say that we cannot destroy an exploiting class without violence, the reply of Congress theorists and workers like Sri Kripalaniji is that violence even if it leads to quick results is useless for it is bound to create new classes." Here we have a picture of Congress choosing to honour its "commitments" to all classes, and motivated by an ideological belief in gradualism and non-violence. However, Driver also goes on to remark that "the influence of the rentiers is very unfortunate indeed" and to explain that "the difference of opinion among the different Provinces regarding the basis

of compensation is clear enough and is largely due to the relative influence or strength of the Zamindars in the different parts of the country" (1949: 176-7).

These latter statements contain a somewhat different emphasis, and represent Congress, both centrally and locally, as being involuntarily buffeted off course by the power of vested interests. This again is the crux of the social democratic ambiguity; namely, whether the Government chooses to proceed by persuasion and compromise, or whether it has no real alternative. The question which remains unanswered is whether Congress, even if it had wanted to, could have expropriated the landlords without compensation.

What it did have a little more latitude over, was the magnitude of the compensation to be paid, though even here, as Driver indicates, room for manoeuvre was limited by the influence of the zamindars themselves. A wide range of different criteria were adopted locally as the basis for fixing compensation rates. Even where the same initial criterion was adopted, such as net income, the multiple of this figure which was actually paid varied greatly. For example, the figure was 15x in Assam, whereas in U.P., for landholders in the same category, it was 28x.[8]

There are several grounds on which the U.P. rate in general can be argued to have been over-generous. Neale,

for instance, argues that, on the basis of the zamindars' own testimony, the compensation could have been fixed at a much lower level. In evidence to the Zamindari Abolition Committee, they had argued that, from the 1930's on, actual rental collections ran at under 2/3 of the rental demand (1962: 239). It was further claimed that net receipts had been under half of nominal income, since 15% of rents were spent in the process of collection (Eastern Economist, March 28th, 1947). On this kind of basis, Neale claims the Committee would have been justified in paying a total sum of compensation of around Rs.20 crores or even less, as against the estimated sum of Rs. 93.43 crores actually payable.[9] (Progress of Land Reform 1963: 4). But this would no doubt have been "politically unacceptable".

Against this kind of background, debates about the ideological rights and wrongs of compensation begin to seem somewhat meaningless. Nevertheless the Congress record and the history of its progress towards accepting zamindari abolition as a policy plank, suggests that, quite apart from the matter of expediency, the main body of the party, in contrast to the C.S.P., never regarded uncompensated expropriation or expropriation with merely token compensation as a desirable goal, since this would have been totally opposed to the Gandhian train of thought. Once again, the

ideological and the expedient converged to recommend gradualist or social democratic means for the implementation of more radical goals.

But, leaving aside the question of methods of implementation and returning to the main theme, it can be argued that the aim of abolishing the zamindars was in any case not necessarily as radical as it sounded.

Zamindari abolition and ideology. Zamindari abolition is in itself "ideologically flexible" because it is the kind of measure which is open to many interpretations and justifications. It can be regarded as being an end in itself, or merely a means to a variety of other ends. Raj Krishna makes the point that measures of land reform can be categorised on the basis of their intended effects (Froehlich 1961: 215-7). He distinguishes four types of reforms which he suggests tend often to be adopted in a chronological sequence. These are successively, liberative, distributionary, organisational and developmental. The last three of these may well be less distinct or sequential than Krishna suggests, but there is certainly a case for analysing any given measure in the light of such a break-down. Zamindari abolition clearly falls into the liberative class, since it is primarily an attempt to overthrow a system which is regarded as outdated and repressive and "feudal" in character. The

removal of this "agricultural cancer of absentee landlordism and social parasitism" (Driver 1949: 55) may be regarded as sufficient in itself to root out the main injustices of rural life.

However, as Krishna implies, such measures may be seen merely as the pre-conditions for other paths of development, and this has certainly been the case in India. Moreover, the more far-reaching the path envisaged, the more specific it tends to be in terms of ideological commitment. This is not, of course, to say that all long-term plans for land reform are "ideologically motivated". It is rather to argue that each successive step, whatever its justification, reveals more clearly the pattern of rural structure which is felt to be ultimately desirable, even if merely as a by-product. In other words, many schools of thought could agree on the desirability of zamindari abolition, but at each subsequent point of decision thereafter, there would tend to be a greater divergence of opinion, and often on ideological grounds.

It seems, for instance, that the Government and the Planning Commission took a more far-reaching view of abolition than the minimal social justice version outlined above, for they recommended abolition theoretically in conjunction with "the principle that there should be an upper limit to

the amount of land that an individual may hold" (1st Plan: 188). Ceilings and redistribution can thus be regarded as a further stopping point along the policy path and, if taken as ends in themselves, will tend to be advocated by those who accept the slogan of "land to the tiller" and hold to the goal of equitable peasant proprietorship as the final objective. From the Congress point of view, this might well have the added advantage, besides liquidating the landlords as a source of political opposition, of creating a "huge class of strong opponents of the class war ideology" (Singh 1958: 41).

But to carry the argument one stage further, even ceilings and redistribution may be regarded as intermediary tools, the end envisaged this time being a reunion of plots into collective or cooperative units. This is of course the Marxian-socialist vision, though such a doctrine may take a shorter route and omit the redistributionary stage.[10]

The listing of these various possible sequels to abolition serves to illustrate the way in which, at least in the short term, it was possible for the Government to satisfy a fairly wide range of political opinion, except of course the most extreme of the zamindars themselves, by advocating these initial liberative measures. Members of the Government undoubtedly had their own fairly concrete perspectives for future policy. The point was that the

ultimate pattern, unlike the structural pattern to be created in industry, could be left conveniently vague.

But could this vagueness of the intended long-term effects of policy persist in the early 1950's when the necessity for planning was accepted? Surely the 1st Plan found it necessary to be explicit about the end goals of the land reform measures which had been embarked on? In fact it can be argued that the 1st Plan, although it certainly did present specific plans for future agrarian development, did so through a formula which was itself derived from, and which managed to combine, a variety of ideological strands. Even if the range of support which this goal, the idea of cooperative village management, could command, was not as extensive as that commanded by zamindari abolition, the explicitness of the final aim was somewhat mitigated, on the one hand by the fact that the ultimate reorganisation was deferred to an unspecified future, and on the other hand, by the fact that the Plan period also saw the instigation, on a national basis, of some very concrete and much less controversial measures in the form of community development and the National Extension Service.

The 1st Plan, ideology and rural policy.

If the 1st Plan was a modest precursor to the later Plans, it was still very important from the point of view of the rural sector in that it laid heavy stress on agriculture (including community development, irrigation and power) allocating to it over 40% of total public investment (Lipton and Streeten 1968: 86). Perhaps paradoxically after the moderateness of the 1948 industrial policy, which had itself been influenced by economic uncertainty, the approach to planning was largely stimulated by the continuing gravity of the economic situation, a large component in which was the stagnant state of agriculture, the consequent severe food shortage and the pressure this exercised towards inflation through rising prices.

The drawing up of the Plan provided the opportunity for outlining strategies in the crucial area of increased agricultural production and productivity, and also for gathering together the various proposals on land reform. The planners professed to see no conflict between these two sets of objectives; under the heading "Land Policy", they addressed themselves to the problem of a "social policy for bringing about those changes in the pattern of production and distribution and in the structure of the rural economy which will serve to establish increasing

equality of status and opportunity and, at the same time, help fulfil the targets of agricultural production which are central to the success of the Five Year Plan" (1st Plan: 184).

This is perhaps the most outstanding assumption in the 1st Plan's land and agricultural policy; namely, the supposition that the dictates of social justice and those of economic efficiency went hand in hand, that "between the two aspects of policy there is no conflict of principle" (185). This was a highly optimistic assumption, slighly belied even by the Plan itself, which simultaneously advocated on the one hand, a ceiling on individual holdings and management, with redistribution of the excess, and on the other hand, in seeking to encourage the pooling of small plots into larger-scale cooperative units, observed that "economies which cannot be availed of by small farms are available to large ones. By its very nature a larger unit of operation and management can secure more credit and finance and can apply these to greater advantage, can diversity its economy and can make a relatively greater contribution to the solution of the country's food problem"(194).

The crucial factor here is perhaps one of time-scale, since the Plan seemed to be advocating redistribution prior to eventual amalgamation, but this might still entail

economic disadvantages in the short term, a fact which the Plan did in fact recognise by alluding to those larger farms "which are so efficiently managed that their break-up would lead to a fall in production" (191). A second example of the planners' optimism appeared in their hope that the amalgamation of land into cooperative units would help the position of the landless labourers. But it was equally possible that the very economies of scale in which faith was placed might entail a reduction in the employment of labour. These kinds of conflict which might well exist between socially just and economically efficient remedies, were to become much more evident in the future.

Cooperative village management. Through the medium of the Plan, the Planning Commission and the Government made it clear that they did not regard zamindari abolition as an end in itself. What was more, they appeared to commit themunequivocally to a radical and coordinated plan for the restructuring of the village economy in the form of eventual cooperative village management. It was boldly stated that the magnitude of the problems to be faced in terms of maldistribution of resources and basic land shortage meant that "the possibility of achieving greater social justice through regulation of contractual terms between different constituent elements in the village is soon exhausted" (195). Especially

because marginal redistribution would hardly affect the position of landless labourers, it was "necessary to consider the problem in terms of institutional changes which would create conditions of equality for all sections of the rural population" (193). It was concluded that "the essence of these changes lies in working out a cooperative system of management in which the land and other resources of a village can be managed and developed so as to increase and diversify production and to provide employment to all those who are able and willing to work."

The ideological derivations of this scheme were recognisably various. First, the scheme seemed to have some socialist overtones, in that it relied on some notion of substantive equality in its emphasis on redistribution. It seemed to place itself in the radical camp both by its stress on structural or institutional as opposed to marginal within-the-system reforms, and by its apparent conviction that cooperative farming was the desirable end goal. However, although cooperation in itself had a socialist ring to it, it was abundantly clear and has become even clearer since, that the label of cooperation could be applied or interpreted in a multitude of ways. As Prof. Driver wrote in 1949, "there is a general feeling among many that we should encourage cooperative farming but this phrase has

been used with a great deal of latitude not to say ambiguity and has evoked mixed reactions of all kinds - the reactions depending upon the meaning and motives of the reformers themselves .... There is at present no universally acceptable definition of Cooperation and it is difficult to arrive at one unless we can all agree on a question like the relationship between Socialism and Cooperation" (1949: 234-5).

But such a relationship was very difficult to clarify, not least because socialism as well as cooperation was somewhat of a blanket term, and provided no unambiguous remedies. The Plan was, for instance, a little ambivalent in its attitude towards private property. The ultimate object was a cooperative management of all the lands owned by the members of a village, even though private property rights were to persist to some extent in that "the rights of ownership are determined by the land reforms legislation of a State", and "even after a system of cooperative management is established, the rate of rent or ownership divident to be allowed to an owner in respect of his land will be determined on the basis of the tenancy laws of a State" (197). But one of the explicit objects of abolition was precisely to establish a wider incidence of ownership rights. The Plan was thus involved in advocating an increase of individual or household ownership as a prelude to a subsequent

modification of these rights. In this process, it could be argued, there was an inherent psychological danger-point. If the first stage was achieved and allowed to become entrenched before the second was set in motion, the end goal of cooperativisation might well become increasingly remote. At the very least it had to be "admitted that considerable tact and caution will be necessary in handling this delicate problem", since "the illiterate peasant's love of property in land is a strong factor" (Driver 1949: 289).

Thus if the 1st Plan's vision of cooperative village management contained some socialist elements, it contained also enough moderating influences to make it clear that the socialism was not of a Marxian or extreme left-wing variety, although Nehru's earlier interest in the soviets[11] and the P.C.'s later studies of the Chinese communes[12] might have suggested that these had served as models or part-models. The socialist elements in the Plan were, in the first place, strongly tempered by Gandhian influences which pulled the rural vision onto more of a Guild Socialist - William Morris axis, and secondly and predictably, reliance was again placed firmly on social democratic methods of implementation, which in this case seemed to mean voluntarism rather than the provision of inducements.

The main evidence of the Gandhian influence was in the

role to be assigned to the re-established panchayats, rather than in the notion of cooperative management as such, since if anything Gandhi's views had tended to shore up approval of private property rights and even an inegalitarian distribution of property.[13] But the faith placed in the panchayat and in its ability to resolve the problems of the village and reorganise its structure was very much a product of populist ideas of grass-roots democracy. Through the theory of trusteeship, Gandhi had implied that harmony and cooperation (in a non-technical sense) were possible where there was considerable inequality of wealthy. The planners therefore seemed to be taking a less extreme view in imagining that the "welfare of the village community" as a whole, was a viable concept where attempts had at least been made to even the distribution of resources. But they were equally optimistic about the benefits of local self government. "It has become imperative" said the Plan, "that at the village level there should be an organisation deriving its authority from the village community and charged with the main responsibility for undertaking programmes of village development" (195). The panchayat was to be both the short-term implementor of land reforms and the long-term organ of village management, "so that the village may become a vital progressive and largely self-governing base of the

structure of national planning, and the existing social and economic disparities resulting from property, caste and status may be obliterated" (197).

The Soviet case. It may not be immediately self-evident that this emphasis on the cohesiveness of the village community and its capacity for self-government was a characteristically or specifically Gandhian view. Both the Russian and the Chinese rural programmes, for example, have utilised ideas of local self-government in describing the structure of the communes or state farms. Prof. Driver appealed to this fact in arguing the possible reconciliation of cooperation and democracy. Writing of the Soviet kholkhoz, he argued that "Today most of the collective farms are run as local bodies with directly elected management boards ... Stalin himself has spoken of 'leaving all decisions to the Kholkhozes themselves,' and of his desire 'not to substitute administrative bullying and bossing for guidance'" (1949:298).

But by any account, this seems a rather simplistic interpretation of the Soviet situation. In the first place, collectivisation had been instituted by a process of determined compulsion. Secondly, the degree of self-determination which was allowed to develop in the collective and state farms, grew up within the general context of strict control from the centre, both through the institutional

framework and through the deployment of highly-motivated cadres and party members.[14] This was a kind of framework which would never have been politically viable, quite apart from desirable, in post-Independence India. Without such a background, the formula of local self-government was bound to have rather different implications from those it had in the Soviet Union. The distinctive element in the Gandhian idea of local self-government was thus a belief in its practicability in a comparatively traditional setting. It combined a basic populism with an absence of belief in basic structural reform.

The very impossibility of a background of firm central control such as existed in the U.S.S.R. was made evident by the tenor of the Plan itself and its advocacy of a gradualist approach to the ultimate pattern. The immediate steps recommended, apart from abolition, were the categorisation of farms into those which were economically efficient and those which were not (the latter to be subject to a ceiling), the setting up of panchayats to control any land which became available, and the encouragement of voluntary co-operative ventures between small and uneconomic plots. Any suggestion of compulsory cooperation was rejected. The emergence of a new rural society was to be inevitably attendant on the cooperation of a multiplicity of agencies

between the Planning Commission and the peasant. Moreover, no time periods were marked out for the approach to cooperative village management. It was held up rather as a hoped-for but somewhat remote goal.

Perhaps in the circumstances, as with abolition, no other solution but a gradualist or compromise one existed. The danger was that, in the absence of relatively rapid progress towards the end goal, the fine balance of ideological elements in the proposed path of development would be upset, and time itself would lend support to one aspect or aspects rather than others. This was a prospect which was foreseen by the most idealistic or the most impatient immediately after Independence. It could with justification be said "If cooperation is evolutionary ..... one may well ask what time limit can be fixed for such evolution? .... Do present times allow us to think in terms of slow evolutionary changes? ... it is extremely unpractical and dangerous to expect miracles from <u>voluntary</u> cooperative effort" (Driver 1949: 251-3). If such rallying cries astutely envisaged the pitfalls inherent in a policy of voluntary cooperation, they also, by implication, grossly over-estimated the powers, or potential powers, of the national Government.

<u>Community development and the National Extension Service</u>.

There was a sense in which the Gandhian vision of self-

sufficient and sacrificial harmony within the traditional village community received an impetus from the other tools of rural policy during the First Plan period, even before the dangers of gradualism and the time factor itself began to errode the prospects for the establishment of institutionalised cooperation as the general pattern. This happened through the medium of the Community Development and National Extension Service programmes, which, whatever the intentions of the planners, had the perhaps inevitable effects of helping to entrench the goal of individual peasant proprietorship without linking it in any way with the long-term goal of cooperative village management. It only began to be realised in the later 1950's that the effects of community development were often turning out to be an extension of additional benefits to the relatively wealthy cultivator and, in many cases, a reinforcement of the power of the village elite, factors which were rapidly contributing to "the creation of a rural petite-bourgeoisie" (Hanson 1966: 535).

The mechanisms through which this occurred remain to be described in the context of a later period in the following chapter. It is more appropriate here to consider the relationship between the community development programme and the controversies about degrees and types of socialism

before Independence.

It was argued earlier that the more extreme were the socialist policies advocated, the more likely were they to be phrased in doctrinaire and somewhat remote terms, and the less likely were they to be applicable in the immediate situation. The Gandhian Constructive Programme which eventually issued in the community development movement, is a case in point. Before Independence, Congress workers, the Congress itself and in due course, the Congress Provincial Ministries, all engaged in rural reconstructive work of one kind or another. After the War, when the Provincial Ministries returned to office, three provinces inaugurated specific projects. The Madras Firka Development Scheme of 1946 and the Bombay Sarvodaya Scheme of 1948 were both directly inspired by the Gandhian Constructive Programme, and concentrated on the setting up of khadi and cottage industries, "harijan uplift" and sanitary and health improvements. The 1948 U.P. Etawah Pilot Project, although designed by the American, Albert Mayer, was essentially very similar, though it laid greater stress on "inner democratisation" and team spirit, and gave the village level worker a higher salary and status on the basis of more training.[15]

These projects were the fore-runners of the national

Community Development and Extension Services launched in 1952 after the conclusion of the Indo-American Technical Co-operation Agreement. The national scheme was thus in the main-stream of Gandhian inspiration. However, as with panchayati raj, it may not be apparent that the scheme was distinctively Gandhian. Was such a programme not perfectly compatible with, and perhaps even the most appropriate tool for, a socialist approach to the rural sector? Were not the gram sewaks merely the counterparts of the Russian "proletarian missionaries" of the 1930's? For many of the Government and the planners this was certainly the intention, but once more the critical factors were the time element, the maintenance of a balance between the various intended parts of the whole rural programme, and thus the institutional background against which community development was to have its effect. If more resources and more efficient methods were channelled to the villages, as was the intention of community development, but without there being effective accompanying measures for the redistribution of land and power, then the end goal of greater equality was bound to be jeopardised. Insofar as community development was not backed by institutional change, it was likely to approximate more closely to the Gandhian model of recon-

struction which had an essentially paternalistic element. This might well produce very tangible benefits for the rural sector as a whole, but it would not amount to what the socialists in the P.S.P. and in Congress itself had, at their most idealistic, envisaged.[16]

The long-term significance of this first period after Independence.

Undoubtedly this period was a critical one for the newly-independent Government, both because of its commitments to the past and because of its responsibilities for the future. From the policy point of view, the outstanding characteristics of the earlier part of the period were, in the first place, the moderateness of actual policy as compared with previous pronouncements (a trend which applied particularly to industry), and secondly, a continuation, notwithstanding, of the ideological plurality which had been apparent in the proposed policy at Independence.

But these trends themselves provided no completely unambiguous grounds for predicting the direction of future policy; on the one hand because the moderateness of policy was accompanied by a professed retention of more radical goals for the future (more extensive nationalisation for industry, and cooperative village management for agriculture),

and on the other hand because it could not be clear which elements in the continuing ideological policy-mix would finally emerge as dominant. This applied particularly to the rural sector, where abolition was itself ideologically flexible and where the actual outcome, as opposed to the stated intentions, of so many other components of rural policy, such as the role of the panchayats and the nature of cooperation, depended on a background of institutional change. The relative rates of progress of each part of the whole policy would inevitably affect the total outcome. The factors which would therefore prove to be crucial were, first, the balance and degree of impetus from the centre and, secondly, the process of implementation at all levels. On these would depend both the effects of the policies already set in motion, and the outcome of the ideological plurality which had so far been manifest at the policy-informing level.

1. The Socialists tended to argue that there was a direct connection between religious and economic conflict, and that Congress's refusal to come to grips with the problem of economic inequality was a contributing influence on the increase in religious tension. Narayan, for instance, argued that if Congress had taken up the cause of the Muslim peasants, Muslim communalist feeling would have been nipped in the bud (Narayan 1946: 111).

2. See chapter 5 below, note 2.

3. D.F. Karaka, for instance, wrote scathingly of Congress that "its policy since freedom has borne no resemblance whatsoever to that revolutionary or democratic socialism to which it was pledged. It has, in fact, in the first two years of its assumption of power proved itself more reactionary, more intolerant, more corrupt, more capitalist ... that the administration of the British" (1950: 242).

4. The Bombay Plan (1944) was designed by a group of prominent industrialists, including J.D. Tata, A.D. Shroff and D.G. Birla. It envisaged a quintupling of industrial production in fifteen years. Heavy industry was to take priority, but small-scale industries were also to be developed for consumer goods production (Hanson 1966: 41).

5. Erdman suggests that support for nationalisation may

be motivated by the desire for "a greater disciplining of the national economy" in the interests of national unity, or by the anti-monopoly and anti-corporate interests of its lower middle class supporters (1967: 54).

6. In 1952, the Jan Sangh gained 0.6% of seats and 3.1% of votes in the Lok Sabha, and in 1957 the figures were 0.8% and 5.93% (Morris-Jones 1964: 163).

7. Ashok Mehta developed this argument in the context of the discussions between Nehru and the P.S.P. in 1953 on the subject of cooperation at all levels between the two parties. The talks actually broke down, but Mehta continued to argue for some kind of institutionalised joint action and reduced conflict, since a "constant tug-of war might weaken the springs of cooperation and make people apolitical" (P.S.P. Convention Report 1953: 168-9).

8. This comparison requires further elaboration. The rate quoted was for the smallest category of zamindars, and several states in fact adopted graded scales. The rate therefore seems particularly high for U.P. A progressive principle was applied through variable re-habilitation grants over and above the basic compensation paid at a fixed multiple of 8. This suggests that the distribution of the compensation varied locally as well as its total amount, and that in some cases, as in U.P., the state might have more leeway in influencing the distribution than in determining the total amount. In others, the determination of the distribution too was

probably highly responsive to the relative influence of groups of zamindars.

9. This is the lowest identifiable total of compensation payable. If the sums payable in interest and in rehabilitation grants are also included, the figure rises to Rs. 198.36 crores (Progress of Land Reform 1963: 4).

10. Baljit Singh (1961) seems to arrive at a compromise between these two positions, by suggesting that on economic grounds, there is a threshold of efficiency at 15 acres for family cultivation. He goes on to argue that a ceiling at this level would make available 10% of all cultivated land which would make it possible for a cooperative farm of 100 acres to be set up in every second or third village. He thus seems to support both limited private cultivation and the establishment of large-scale joint farming, at least in the short term.

11. After his first visit to Russia in 1927, Nehru wrote "The Soviet system has become so much identified with Bolshevism and Russia that it is difficult to think of it apart from them. Yet it is conceivable that it may exist ... without communism ... the village soviet is said to be the soul of the village. The word "soviet" means sabha and a village soviet would correspond to a panchayat elected by almost all the residents of an Indian village" (1927: 23).

12. See chapter 5 below.

13. In 1931, Gandhi said "I am inviting those people who consider themselves as owners today to act as trustees, i.e. owners, not in their own right, but owners in the right of those whom they have exploited. I will not dictate to them what commission to take, but ask them to take what is fair" (Young India Nov. 26th, 1931: 368). As late as 1947, Gandhi told a group of landlords that "they had a bright future if they became the trustees of the poor kisans. Such trustees would take nothing for themselves that their labour and care did not entitle them to. Then, they would find that no law would be able to touch them" (Harijan May 4th, 1947: 134). It is thus clear that any reform or redistribution which was to occur was to be dependent on voluntary restraint.

14. It was not until about 1934 that the peasants really accepted the new system. Between 1930 and 1934, some 50,000 "proletarian missionaries" were drafted to the villages to help with the work of transformation. From 1933-34, local control over agriculture was vested in the Machine Tractor Stations under the direct control of the Central Committee, and from then on, authority was shared between the M.T.S. and the local Party. The M.T.S.'s were finally abolished in 1958. As a result, the farm was to become an independent planning unit, "with the district party secretary as the focal point of Party control". A

description of these developments is to be found in L. Schapiro 1963: 455-9 and 577-9.

15. Details of these various schemes and their forerunners are given in V.P. Pande 1967.

16. The P.S.P.'s support for community development was expressly qualified by its fear that background reforms were not proceeding fast enough. A resolution on the P.C.'s Progress Report of the 1st Plan, for instance, warned that "schemes like Community Development Projects and National Extension Service ... are gravely threatened by administrative cumbrousness and the absence of land reforms and of effective cooperatives and panchayats" (P.S.P. Convention Report 1953: 122). Another possible reason for the P.S.P.'s lack of enthusiasm for community development was its current engrossment with the equally-Gandhian-inspired but apparently more appealing Bhoodan Movement, described by Mehta as "the most dynamic movement to emerge recently" (171).

CHAPTER 5

Ideology and Policy in the Mid-50s and After

Phases in Congress Development.

If the successive phases in Congress history are seen as characterised by shifts in the nature and functions of ideology, as related to changes in the role which Congress itself was playing, then the period of the mid-50s may be seen as a kind of crescendo of ideological activeness and initiative, after which the 1960s have emerged through a process of reaction and feedback, as a period of comparative ideological passivity or receptivity.

The division of Congress history into phases such as these begins to make apparent the way in which the suggested ideal types for the role of ideology in given situations, may be applied in the Indian context. In the pre-Independence period, so far as Congress's dominant tenet, that of Swaraj, was concerned, ideology can be represented as having been primarily a demand "input" into the political system. At this stage, again as far as Congress was concerned, the competing interest group aspects of ideology, although

evident, were relatively peripheral, mainly because of the movement's remoteness from control over domestic policy. Such conflicts as did arise tended to make for the adoption of somewhat vague and comprehensive policy slogans, rather than for direct or prolonged ideological confrontations.

But if the pre-Independence period was one in which Congress ideology fulfilled a predominantly demand function in the guise of nationalism and nationalist demands, then the immediate post-Independence period was one in which it was caught in a phase which was transitional, to carry the analogy further, between demand and supply functions. As Congress underwent the fairly abrupt transition from rebel to establishment, the raison d'etre of its attacking impetus was removed and the whole organisation was turned back on itself and reoriented towards dealing with the mass of the nation. This meant that the balance of pressures acting on Congress ideology underwent a radical change. Congress was now essentially concerned with domestic policy, with "cutting up the national cake" and so with inveighing against or reacting to, vested interests of various kinds. This was reflected ideologically in the appearance of a series of pronouncements and measures which amounted to a considerable modification and redefinition of earlier slogans,

but yet carried forward much of their ambiguity.

The encounter with interest groups within the party and within the national community thus provided the main moulding pressure on Congress policy-making in this period. But the original slogans and the emphasis on solidarity which had been engendered by the attacking role, did not, or were not allowed to, wither away. They were an essential ingredient in Congress's continuing leadership role, and a backing for its task of holding the new nation together in the face of internal pressures. Hence there was a continuing emphasis on the symbols of national unity,[1] and a continuing appeal to the avowedly traditional sentiments of solidarity and equality. Where these appeared to impinge too specifically on the content of actual policy and hence possibly to conflict with the new compromise formulas which were appearing, the disjunction was sometimes justified by drawing a distinction between short and long-term policy-making. The exigencies of the immediate situation, it was implied, might demand compromise, but the larger aims would be adhered to in the long run. Nationalisation could only be undertaken now in part, but a period of ten years was cited as the point of postponement.

There was, then, little attempt at this stage to use

socialism as a rallying cry. The Industrial Policy and the 1st Plan seemed to endeavour to pay enough cognisance to the earlier socialist formulas to keep the left wing loyal, but the Plan purported to be guided by the constitutional Directives of State Policy which advocated, less specifically, "that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good". The task of the 1st Plan was thus to appeal to those desires for equality and redistribution which had formerly begun to find expression through socialist formulas, however embryonic, without actually committing itself to socialism. Because of divided counsels within Congress and crises in the country at large, such an extreme ideological initiative would have been out of the question. The ideological supply function at this stage was one of dealing in modifications and compromises rather than in plans for major reconstruction.

Congress in the mid-50's: a rise in Government initiative.

It is another change of ideological gear on Congress's part which can be argued to mark the onset of a second post-Independence phase in the mid-1950's. The very leadership role which had been held somewhat in abeyance

in the early 1950's suddenly seemed to be thrust to the fore, as Congress and the Planning Commission attempted to assume a much greater initiative on the ideological front. A succession of incidents seemed to herald a major injection of socialist principles into the guidance of policy. The Congress Avadi Resolution in favour of a "socialistic pattern of society" and the acceptance of a similar resolution by the Lok Sabha in 1954[2] could both be interpreted as the forerunners of an increasing tempo of recognisably ideologically-motivated proposals. This bore fruit most obviously in the 1955-56 Budget,[3] in the 2nd Plan Draft Outline which began to be prepared in 1954, and, as far as agriculture was concerned, in the Report of the Delegation to China on Agrarian Cooperatives in 1956 and the subsequent Congress Nagpur Resolution on cooperatives of 1959.

Needless to say, there are many ways in which this apparent increase in ideological tempo can be explained, and many factors which can be cited as relevant. The most obvious, and the simplest, kind of explanation is one which appeals to the personalities involved, and specifically of course to the influence of Nehru. It is suggested that this was the earliest point at which Nehru, having previously

been frustrated by the constraints of the political situation, was able to harness the machine of government to explicitly socialist aims. As Hanson puts it, "Few of the political elite were socialists in any meaningful sense of the word, but Nehru had by this time achieved that degree of eminence where his own public approval of socialism virtually became an act of policy" (1966: 123).

Nehru as the driving force? It is unquestionably true that Nehru himself was very influential in the apparent stepping up of socialism, as he had been at earlier crucial points, such as the 1936 Lucknow Congress and the deliberations of the N.P.C.. It is also true that, since the death of Patel and the defeat of Tandon for the Congress presidential election in 1950, the right-wing faction had been severely weakened, and Nehru's power considerably increased. Until then, the Government had really been headed by a duumvirate, but henceforth there was no serious challenged to Nehru. However, it is surely inadequate to isolate only this factor, thereby suggesting that Nehru produced a new policy orientation out of his own ideological leanings and virtually imposed it on a passive or unperceptive following. Writing of a relevant speech of Nehru's to the National Development Council in 1954 in which he described the

proposed "socialistic picture of society", Hanson suggests, for example, that "no one chose to challenge him on the subject either because they "thought that so vague a concept would make little real difference to the actual practice of economic planning", or because they "felt that a plan described as 'socialistic' would win wider approval than one not so described" (1966: 124). This seems, at the least, a somewhat superficial explanation, which ignores the possibility that the mooted socialistic pattern was capable of arousing some sort of active emotional response, even from those who were well short of being doctrinaire Marxists or socialists.

It is worth looking at the Nehru-imposition argument more closely. To writers such as Hanson, taking a retrospective view of Indian planning, its more ideologically-inspired components and their advocates stand out predominantly as obstacles to economic efficiency and distorters of economic rationality. From this point of view, Nehru's "greatness was always somewhat diminished by his enthusiasm for ideologically-inspired panaceas" (Streeton and Lipton 1968: 37). In similar vein, contemplation of the Plans arouses the "suspicion that much of time the Commission is engaged in bowing before idols whose clay feet

are becoming ever more obvious". Such idols, it is pointed out, are not fathered by the Commission itself, but are "the work of its political masters" (35).

The drawing of a contrast between "ideologically-inspired" and "pragmatic" proposals has now become a commonplace in economic debate about India, as in partisan political argument. Such debates are clearly in the realm of value judgment, and it would seem more useful in the context of an examination of the various roles of ideology, to attempt to assess some of the factors which might account for the appeal of such "ideologically-inspired" policies, and which specifically made for an apparent increase in this element in 1954-55. Explanation in terms of the misplaced idealism or "regrettable enthusiasm for ideologically-inspired panaceas" of individual politicians, leaves unanswered the further questions of why these panaceas engendered such enthusiasm and why, if they were foisted on the Government machine by a small segment of the leadership, they did not provoke wider opposition at the time.[4]

<u>The wider appeal of the mid-50's policies</u>.

The incidence of a socialistic phase in Government policy in the mid-50's must surely be examined in relation

to the whole tenor and course of Congress's leadership role, and not merely in relation to the political dispositions of Nehru's immediate circle. It must also be seen in the light of the current economic state of the country and, deriving from this, the image of the national situation which was held by those involved in government. Their assessment of the present situation, together with their aspirations for India's future development were likely to affect fairly radically their perspectives on policy alternatives. The final factor which must be considered is the way in which proposed policy might appeal, not only to national aspirations but also to sectional interests. Hanson himself mentions that, at the relevant meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Development Council in May 1955, several Chief Ministers in fact "demanded an even 'bolder and bigger plan'". Whether they were moved by national aspirations for expansion or, as seems more likely, by regional interests, this would seem to be evidence that at least here there was support for large-scale planning. The N.D.C. explicitly decided that "the Second Five-Year Plan should be drawn up so as to give concrete expression to the policy decisions relating to the socialistic pattern of society" (Hanson 1966: 130).

On closer inspection, it also appears that these policies of the mid-50's did not in any case represent such an unqualifiedly new or doctrinaire departure from previous policy as Hanson implies. The fact that they coexisted with, and were tempered by, more traditional policies, was another reason why there was less controversy than a radical resurgence might have been expected to provoke. What many of the "symptoms" did more nearly represent was an intensification of ideological elements already evident in previous Congress policy; namely the emphasis on re-distribution and social justice typical of a modern welfare state oriented society, and here expressed, for example, in the findings of the Taxation Enquiry Commission, which recommended a statutory ceiling on incomes (which was not implemented), and by the impetus behind the Rural Credit Survey, which reported in 1955, and which was concerned with the problem of peasant indebtedness.

Perhaps the major factor responsible for creating the impression that there had been a radical doctrinal shift, was the form taken by the 2nd Plan. This clearly seemed to accept for itself the typical Marxist-Soviet model in terms of sectoral balance, long term growth aims and inter-generational distribution of benefits. This type and

scope of plan could be seen to have immediate structural effects, in that it entailed a greater emphasis on the public sector, and this, together with the nationalisation of the Imperial Bank of India in 1955, seemed to constitute a marked change of emphasis. But the terms of the 2nd Industrial Policy Resolution showed that there was no radical new departure here. Air transport was to be the only new state-owned industry, and although the list of 'reserved industries' was increased from six to seventeen there was still to be room for "the expansion of the existing privately owned units, or the possibility of the State securing the cooperation of private enterprise in the establishment of new units when the national interests so require" (2nd Plan: 4). It was a change of degree rather than kind, and the principle of a mixed economy was still to prevail.

The apparent ideological extremeness of Mahalanobis's plan-frame was further modified first by its Gandhian emphasis on small-scale industry, which could be justified on anti-inflation and employment - promotion criteria, but which also coincided conveniently with Gandhian preferences, and secondly by the fact that it lacked one major ingredient of the communist model, namely the collectivisation of agriculture. This could even be argued to be an essential

part of the model, for it provided the efficient means for commanding the rural surplus and providing the vital resources for large-scale investment in the industrial sector. Thus the 2nd Indian Plan was, in one sense, firmly in the social democratic tradition in that it adopted socialist, or at least socialist-by-association, ends, but was incapable of countenancing a form of reorganisation which would entail compulsion.[5] What it has also in practice failed to do is to provide an adequate substitute for this particular ingredient, such as an effective system of rural taxation.

Furthermore, although the plan looked like a socialist instrument in some ways, there were many aspects of it which industrialists and business interests could find appealing. The emphasis on heavy industry was one which would in many ways benefit the private sector, since the manufacturing targets were to be far too large for the public sector alone to fulfil, and the public sector would often be operating at a disadvantage anyway, at least initially. The infrastructural effects of large-scale government investment in the industrial sector would also be beneficial to private enterprise. This was likely to appeal to the predisposition for rationalisation and expansion which had

been evident in industry earlier, in its cooperation, at least in part, with the Congress National Planning Committee, and in the formulation of the Bombay Plan. The crucial difference between 1947, which had seen a "strike of capital", and 1954, was that industry's confidence had been buttressed by the moderateness of Congress policy.

Thus, although the policies of the mid-50's may be described as representing a resurgence of ideological initiative within Congress, this resurgence is not susceptible to simple explanation. The most immediate cause was certainly the relative eclipse of the right-wing faction within Congress which followed the death of Patel and the defeat of Tandon. This left the way clear for an expansion of Government initiative to express itself through socialist-tending policies. But this very initiative was not simply the emergence of a latent force which had previously been held in check by the Patel faction. It seems feasible to suggest that it had also gathered support precisely because of the checks and setbacks of the period of internecine conflict.[6] Another predisposing factor may well have been the anticlimax of the clearly non-utopian post-Independence situation itself. In the 1952 elections, Congress received 45% of the popular vote (Morris-Jones 1964: 163). In

absolute terms, this seems a high figure, but it is less impressive when compared with Congress' reception of 91% of the non-Muslim vote in 1946 (Brecher 1959: 305). The drop may have been partly due to a sense of frustrated expectation in the country at large.

In a sense then, the inner circle of the Congress leadership, the lower ranks of the party, and even the electorate, were in a psychological state which was conducive to accepting a "big push", or at least a bigger push than had previously been attempted. The 1st Plan had been too small and too limited to satisfy many that a planning experiment had really been tried, but at the same time it was successful enough to encourage hopes that planning had great potential. Thus the policies of the mid-50's bore a socialist imprint, certainly because of the transcendence of the left wing of the party, but also for far more contingent reasons, such as that growth theory was at the time dominated by capital accumulation models, of which the Soviet pattern was but the clearest example; that aspirations for national economic development were inevitably high, and rapid industrialisation seemed a sine qua non both for this and for an increased degree of economic independence; and that private enterprise

welcomed increased government investment, even if it was not very happy with the expansion of the public sector. The mid-50's policies were not as doctrinaire, nor was the party and the planning machinery as passive a vehicle for the Nehru faction, as has sometimes been supposed. Altogether, these policies are best described as the product of a phase of increased Government initiative, which was made possible by a conjunction of predisposing factors, and which for a variety of reasons was characterised by seemingly socialist patterns.

Impact of the mid-50's policies

The irony of these policies was that they were in a sense self-defeating, for they set in motion a chain of reactions which in many areas produced a backlash of opposition. The backlash has naturally directed itself against the original policies themselves, or aspects of them, and because they laid themselves open to the charge of having been ideologically-inspired, the logical outcome has been a heightening of counter-ideologies. However undoctrinaire the policies originally were, they have been most vocally opposed precisely on the charge of ideological dogmatism. This has created all the conditions for a

period of manifest pluralism and comparative Government defensiveness, since the opposition to a much greater extent, has ceased to accept the constraints of the Congress umbrella and has become far more explicitly assertive. Some of the links in this chain of reactions must now be examined. Its impact on agriculture has been especially important. The starting point must be a consideration of some of the problems inherent in the logic of the 2nd Plan.

One of the major features of the 2nd Plan, as compared with the 1st, was the predominant emphasis which it placed on the industrial sector, as revealed by the relative shares of public investment which were devoted to industry in the two plans. The 2nd Plan proposed to devote 18.5% of total investment to industry and minerals, as against a figure of 7.5% for the 1st Plan. Agriculture, Community Development, irrigation and power suffered a corresponding fall in shares of investment, from 43% to 31% (2nd Plan: 51-2).

It has often been pointed out that such value judgments about sectoral priorities are a function, not only of political and economic structure, but also of ideological bias. Sjoberg, for example, suggests that "development ideologies may be categorised on the basis of combinations

of the two co-ordinates, type of political structure and sectoral priority. The totalitarian but rural-biased type, for example, was manifest in Nazi Germany with its emphasis on "folk culture". The pro-urban but also totalitarian structure is the typical Communist pattern. Sjoberg suggests that India would fit into this scheme under the heading of the pro-rural and anti-urban democratic model typical of the "key nations in the third world" and those whose development patterns are heavily influenced by W. European, and more particularly, American sponsorship (Smelser and Lipset 1966).

The obvious sense in which this assessment would seem to fit India is of course in relation to the uncompromising Gandhian stress on the value of rural life and, conversely, on the evils of urbanisation. But this represents only one segment of Indian ideology, and the 2nd Plan is surely the embodiment of a quite different set of values. Whilst not necessarily anti-rural, the logic of the Plan, by virtue of its emphasis on heavy industrialisation, was essentially pro-urban. It was this sector which was held to contain the all-important growth points. Apart from anything else, this was bound to affect the relative status of rural and urban life. As Industry has expanded, factory

workers have increasingly become an enviable elite within the labour force.[7] Urban life has apparently had its attractions for a long time, but the expansion of the industrial sector is bound to enhance this.

This raises the whole problem of the concealed distributional values of large-scale national planning. There is no doubt that the Soviet model presumes that sacrifices by present generations in the form of consumption foregone are justified in the cause of long-term growth which will ultimately benefit future generations. This is deferred gratification on an intergenerational scale, and insofar as the 2nd Plan subscribed to a capital accumulation model, India too was involved in this pattern. What was far less clear was how the burdens of stepping up the rate of investment were to be distributed between sectors. Again, the logic of the Soviet model implied that the rural sector must be the main source of resources, and this seemed to be essential in the Indian case too, for the rural sector accounted for at least 75% of the population. The draining off of a "rural surplus" both in physical terms (food for the towns) and in financial terms (through taxation and savings)[8] was an essential component of this kind of plan. But, as was suggested

above, the Indian system could not countenance any kind of enforced collectivisation such as had mobilised resources in the Soviet Union. Nor could it impose differential burdens on sections of the population, even by means other than regimentation or force, without being affected by the waves of disgruntled protest this was certain to arouse.

This complex of problems related to the distributional elements of planning had at least three kinds of effect, either intended or unintended, in the Indian context. The first, arising from the problem of implementation and mobilisation, was an elaboration or reinforcement of a whole ideology of corporate participation which could draw on Gandhian sources, and which might be labelled a forced-mobilisation surrogate. The second result was a recognition on the planners' part of the need for short-term action to reconcile the overall distributionary logic of the Plan with notions of welfare which had already raised expectations of growing equality in the near future. Insofar as these latter actions were unsuccessful, there was a third type of result, which was the creation of a set of new "underprivileged" groups, such as the kulak or substantial peasant class. In many cases these were not in fact <u>new</u> groups or configurations of interests. In was rather that they

found a new vociferousness and sense of grievance in claiming that they were either exploited or under-rewarded by the actual process of planning.

The problems of mobilisation. To take first of these three, the problem of mobilisation, it is as well to note that there is here a definitional difficulty. In some quarters of political theory, there is a tendency to locate processes of mobilisation only within so-called "command" economies,[9] the implication being that the term is to be limited to contexts in which some type or degree of coercion is applied in order to make individuals and groups cooperate, or rather conform, with the priorities of the central Government. If mobilisation is used only in this limited sense, then one is forced to describe a process which seems akin but which occurs in a democratic nation such as India, as a mobilisation-surrogate. Alternatively, if the term mobilisation is more widely applied, one can describe such a process as a sub-type of mobilisation.

This latter view seems to be born out by J.P. Nettl's usage of the term, which describes mobilisation as taking effect "by evoking particular structures and by giving people common goals and reference groups." (1967: 115). There is here the implication that mobilisation is both,

or either, a means of external structural organisation of individuals and/or a reorientation of their motivations and goals. It would thus seem that, whilst the totalitarian political process employs both, and the democratic concentrates on the latter, both systems may be described as employing types of mobilisation. This indeed is the conclusion which Nettl comes to in suggesting that "manipulated mobilisation" (e.g. "Ghana, Egypt or Tanzania") and "a mobilisation decked out with the myths and symbols of participation" (e.g. "a British or Swedish general election") are both "essentially products as well as means of mobilisation as much as institutionalised occasions for making rational choices" (111).

Hence, whether the process of organising individual and group action within a non-totalitarian state is classified as a type of mobilisation, or as a substitute for it, it can at least be recognised as employing some of the same elements as the more coercive process. It then becomes relevant to ask, first, <u>how</u> such elements are employed without a coercive backing, and, secondly, how <u>effective</u> such a process can be. In answer to the first question, the means employed in the Indian context, would seem to be at least partly the promotion of a philosophy of

participation which operates not only at the level of official exhortations in favour of national cooperation, but also, and more concretely, through the provision of an institutional framework which is intended to stimulate participation.

A prime example of the first phenomenon, that of exhortation towards voluntary cooperation and participation is provided by the Report of the Delegation to China on Agrarian Co-operatives of 1956. Most of the members returned from China full of enthusiasm for Chinese methods, and fully convinced that "cooperative farming is necessary from economic as well as social conditions" (Delegation Report 1957: 180). They consequently recommended a specific programme for the organisation of 10,000 cooperative farming societies over the next four years. It might therefore be supposed that this report falls more into the category of reorganising the institutional framework of motivation, rather than relying on mere exhortation. The point is that the Report assumed a wave of voluntary action could be initiated first in order to <u>produce</u> the institutional reorganisation. Although the Delegation took pains to point out that they "were aware that the political system obtaining in China has a certain advantage

in influencing a particular pattern of behaviour from the people," they nevertheless advocated that "the principle of voluntariness should be scrupulously adhered to" (184-5). In fact this very reference to the Chinese "advantage" makes plain the pressures which lead to reliance on exhortation and to optimistic thinking about the development of an "atmosphere ... in which social values and outlook will progressively change to more egalitarian non-exploitative social and economic order." It was hoped that the participatory impetus, once underway, would be cumulative and self-reinforcing, since "co-operative farming ... will provide opportunities of working together for the various groups of people now held apart by social and communal divisions and thus bring about increasingly an emotional integration of the people into a living entity" (182).

This is the kind of language which still abounds in the planning literature,[10] and which Hanson suggests may be partly "speech-day stuff", but in which he also professes to detect and to deride a serious hope that such exhortations will have a material impact on the attitudes and priorities of the people at large. There is, he suggests, "the persistent suggestion that, if the right

words are spoken to the right people at the right time, 'the masses' can be mobilised for plan fulfilment" (Streeton and Lipton 1968: 41).

But once again, this is surely not an arbitrary or merely escapist tendency on the part of the planners, but springs from the very nature of the Indian planning dilemma, and the very real problem which any non-totalitarian regime faces in attempting to rally support for measures which do not immediately appeal to motives of sectional gain. It is a problem which is also not unique to India. The prolonged economic difficulties of Britain, for instance, have called forth lamentations about the unwillingness of individuals to identify with the crisis, and to modify their behaviour accordingly. As the Economist put it, the country "wants the economic ends of increasing prosperity all right, but it is adamantly reluctant to will the means ... The country has sought and still seeks, a painless economic miracle to be performed with biblical speed and precision" (Davis 1968: 14-5).

Of course the implication here is not that it would be sufficient in itself if people's motives were to change. The chain of reaction is assumed to be more complex, in that changed public attitudes would give the Government

more scope for tighter management of the economy and in this sense, would only be a precondition rather than an efficient cause. But similarly in the Indian case, it is seldom implied that increasing willpower and public-spiritedness will, of themselves, produce results. The implication is rather that such attitudes will provide the catalyst for making Government-sponsored changes more effective. This is not to deny that such hopes may well seem naive. It is rather to point out that such modes of thought are not the monopoly of Indian planners, and that they are an expression of the fundamental mobilisation dilemma.

Institutional provisions for participation. The Indian philosophy of participation goes further than mere exhortation, in that it has been embodied in attempts to institutionalise participatory sentiments and hence to essay the difficult task of "stimulating spontaneity" through the medium of the panchayats. The beginnings of this structure of course pre-dated the 2nd Plan, and its roots were much older even than the 1st Plan. The notion, or myth, of the traditional village panchayat has been a powerful and nostaligic one, often related to what Thorner calls a "Rousseauian" view of village life (1953: 209).

Whether or not they were undermined by the British, there was little evidence of such institutions by the Nineteenth Century. In 1909, the Royal Commission on Decentralisation recommended their revival, and this theme was taken up enthusiastically by Congress, especially under Gandhi's influence. Between 1919 and 1926; most provinces passed enabling legislation, although by 1947, not even 10% of villages had panchayats (Srinivasan 1956: 206).

The logic of planning, calling for participation and the expression of 'felt needs' from below, eventually converged at least superficially, with the older tradition which holds in veneration the whole idea of local self-government, and which produced, quite independently of the plans, post-independence legislation to support the re-establishment of panchayats. All states had passed such legislation by the early 1950's, and the panchayats were generally charged with local welfare functions, such as street-maintenance and sanitation, though their budgets and resolutions were subject to state approval.[11] Interestingly enough, the planners had at first been reluctant to invest too heavily in this particular syndrome, apparently hoping that participation-stimulation could be combined with a fairly high degree of centralisation.

When the Community Development (C.D.) Programme was initiated in 1952, the administrative structure devised, although allowing for processes of consultation at all levels, did not seek to incorporate the panchayats at all closely. It paid cognisance to the need for local involvement and participation, but relied on a centralised organisation, running from centre to village, via state, district and project or block levels. This was embodied in an official hierarchy which partly overlapped with the old executive functionaries, incorporating the Collector, or Deputy Commissioner, at district level.

There was clearly a tension here between the role of the authoritative official as innovator, and the welfare worker as participator, and the role of the panchayat was in consequence not well defined. The Commission's aim was apparently to attempt to ensure the effective injection of initiative into the local situation by constructing clear lines of communication and authority with the centre, but to invest also in the possibility of enlisting local enthusiasm through processes of consultation.

However, by the mid-50's it had become evident from many sources that the C.D. Programme was underfulfilling expectations, both in development and in redistributive

terms. Dube, for instance, in his study of two villages in Western U.P., came to the conclusion that nearly 70% of the benefits from extension work were going to the village elite, and that the projects had initiated no schemes to help either the poorer cultivators or the landless labourers. The motives of the participants he gauged to be predominantly economic advantage, prestige, and compliance with the wishes of officials and village leaders. The main obstacles were held to be apathy, suspicion and a failure of communications (Dube 1958: 82-4).

The deficiencies of the concrete results of C.D. began to be seen as symptomatic of a fundamental organisational malaise. The 3rd and 4th Reports of the Programme Evaluation Organisation (P.C., 1956 and 1957) on C.D., laid the foundation for a mounting suspicion that the whole emphasis of the C.D. structure was misplaced. The former, for instance, concluded that one of the major defects was a lack of understanding of "the objectives and responsibilities of panchayat membership and (lack of a) readiness to use panchayats for planning and executing village development programmes" (19). The Report of the U.P. Panchayat Raj Committee, speaking of panchayats, also expressed the view that their "role in economic development is negligible"

(1954: 14).

The most interesting points about this tide of disillusion and criticism are that, in the first place, it highlighted the inherent tension between the two notions of 'directed innovation' and 'voluntary participation' and the kinds of administrative structures these implied, and secondly, it led to a shift of emphasis from the former to the latter, however rational or otherwise this could be argued to be. When the 2nd Plan Report came to the conclusion that the whole question of C.D. administration should be reviewed, and suggested that the National Development Committee set up an enquiry for the purpose, the final outcome was a strong recommendation for "democratic decentralisation". The Balvantray Mehta Report (1957) suggested the setting up of a "representative democratic institution" at block level, to be called the panchayat samiti, which should be linked with the gaon panchayat by elections, and whose powers should be "concentrated in the field of development." The aim was thus to increase local self-government and at the same time to mesh it in more closely with development activities. All the failings of C.D. seemed to be concentrated on the scapegoat of the organisational structure.

This shift of emphasis seemed to be the joint product, first of a reaction away from the attempted centralism of the original C.D. structure, and secondly, of the wave of enthusiasm for participatory techniques which was itself engendered by the increase in the scale of planning. The rural sector thus found itself in the somewhat anomalous situation of experiencing, whilst the nation at large embarked on a large plan, both a decreased share of resource allocation and a movement even further away from the organisational structures which were characteristic of those nations whose plans seemed most akin to the Indian model, both in scale and in emphasis; namely the Soviet Union and China.

Indeed, as was suggested earlier, the very contrast between the two types of power structure seemed to provoke the Indian planners into laying a greater stress on voluntarism and participation. This is particularly clear in the case of the Delegation to China, since the whole theme of their report was the desirability of adopting Chinese programmes and patterns, but explicitly without the coercive centralism which was a major feature of the Chinese system. Only two members of the delegation,[12] in a minority report, questioned the possibility or

desirability of such an operation in India, and thus hinted at the crucial difference between a participation ideology which is backed by coercive means, and one which is not. Of course the disagreement was not only about the inevitable association between particular policies and their means of implementation. This minute of dissent argued that the cooperativisation of farming was in any case intrinsically undesirable. But these members also argued that it was naive to suppose such a policy could be implemented within a voluntary framework. "We grant", they said, "that developments in foreign countries should be viewed with sympathy, but we cannot ignore the background of their respective political systems and means adopted in achieving their objectives ... If we isolate the Communist ideology and the agrarian policy followed by the Chinese Government, we would give an erroneous impression that a similar policy can be followed by our country without adopting similar means" (Delegation Report: 193).

In the long term, it seems that the dissenters made the more realistic assessment of what was politically viable for Indian agriculture, given the constraints on implementation which were set by a democratic system. The Nagpur Resolution of 1959 ratified Congress's approval

of joint farming as the desirable pattern for the whole rural sector. Of course the passing of such a resolution gives a spurious impression of unity within Congress, and the non-emergence of widespread cooperativisation has undoubtedly been partly the product of opposition and indifference at a level much higher than that of peasant or kulak resistance. It has not only been that the system lacked the means for inducing the cultivator to collectivise.[13] It also lacked the reserves of centralised power which would have enabled the government to take the ideological initiative and present cooperative farming, both to Congress and the nation, as a policy which was desirable per se. Only the very beginnings of such persuasive powers were available to the government. The problem is again the fundamental one of how the mobilisation of groups and individuals at all levels is to be achieved in a democratic system, whether or not the patterns adopted are those typical of more highly centralised regimes. It is the recurrent problem in what Hanson calls Nehru's "delusive vision" of the possibility "of combining economic mobilisation with political conciliation, a soviet economy with a western policy" (Streeton and Lipton; 43).

The need to counteract the Plan. The second problem which

was cited above as flowing from the distributionary effects of the 2nd Plan, was that of how they should be countered in the short run. There was no doubt that the P.C. was aware of such conflicts of interests and claims, and that it did attempt to implement ameliorative measures. For example, it was clear that large investment in industry was liable to make urban incomes rise faster than rural ones. The P.C., however, deliberately pursued such policies as the subsidisation of small scale and village industries. Since there was little case for this on efficiency grounds,[14] the motive would seem to have been to boost rural incomes, as well as perhaps to reduce the incentive for urban migration. Of course in some cases, the alleviation of gross inequalities was perfectly compatible with the provisions of the Plan. C.D. and land reform, for instance, were partly intended, at least in theory, to improve the lot of the landless labourers, even within the general framework of a plan which concentrated resources on industry. But there were other areas in which the economic forces set in motion by the Plan had to be deliberately modified or countered in the interests of social equality. Insofar as group and sectoral allocations, as they affected differential incomes, were not offset by deliberate welfare policy, the

result was liable to be a growth of resentment and discontent, whether this was stimulated by a sense of absolute or, more probably, of relative deprivation. This leads on to the third major outcome of the change of policy emphasis in the mid-50's, which was referred to above as the emergence of new, or newly vociferous, underprivileged groups. This was important both because it created immediate oppositional pressures against the proposed policies, and also because it provided potential support for the longer-term crystallisation of political opposition to Congress.

New interest groups. This kind of discontent, as it affected the rural sector, is best symbolised by the peasant leader and joint founder of the A.I.K.S., N.G. Ranga. Ranga had advanced socialist arguments in the 1930's and had criticised Gandhi for showing signs of being too favourably disposed towards upper class interests, both rural and urban, in his trusteeship pronouncements, but he now developed a blanket anti-urbanism in face of large-scale industrialisation and planning.

Briefly, the gist of Ranga's argument, which rests on a reinterpretation of the Marxist exploitation thesis, is that as far as the peasantry is concerned, "Sovietism has

come to take up the role of Capitalism in its machinations against his class" (1957: 351). Referring specifically to the 2nd Plan, Ranga admits that "it is true to say that peasants are the corner-stone in this adventure since in the long run, their agricultural surplus forms the foundation for any development. But because of this, they should not be made to suffer too much ... there should be parity in the sacrifices demanded, burdens imposed and benefits conferred between Peasants and other classes of our society in making and implementing our National Development Plans" (479-80). Particular grievances are cited, such as that "although the 2nd Plan seeks to increase the national income by 25% ... peasants are expected to derive not 25% of benefit as could be expected ... in accordance with (the) canons of social justice, but only 18% of increase in their sector's income" (482), and that "five to six million jobs are being created for an urban sector which will have 6.3 million unemployed while only 2.0 to 2.4 millions are being offered to the rural sector which will have 9 million unemployed" (486).

Ranga concludes that the peasant's position can only be improved by "developing political strength in order to ward off the mischief of Capitalism and Socialism" (351).

In this process, cooperative societies have a role to play since they will increase group power and bargaining ability. Although Ranga claims to represent peasants in general, this would seem to indicate that he often identifies with the more substantial cultivator, who would benefit most from cooperative society membership. In the year after this was written, Ranga became one of the founders of the All India Agriculture Federation, an association which, as Erdman puts it, "claims to be peasant, but is largely kulak" (1967: 70). The nature of its sectional interest would seem to be indicated by the fact that it has declared itself opposed both to extended peasant proprietorship and to joint farming, on the grounds that they destroy initiative (Karunakaran in Poplai, ed. 1963). When the Nagpur Resolution on cooperative farming provided the immediate stimulus and rallying point for a new grouping of discontented right-wing elements in the formation of the Swatantra Party, the A.I.A.F., together with its counterpart for the industrial sector, the Forum of Free Enterprise,[15] was an important contributing influence. When it came to the formulation of the 3rd 5-Year Plan, Swatantra was the main spokesman for the opposition, unlike the situation of 1954-5 when this role had been fulfilled by the Communists.

The 1960's: Congress on the defensive

The growth of formal opposition. By the beginning of the 1960's then, interests which had previously been accommodated under the Congress umbrella were finding a vocal mouthpiece through Swatantra. Swatantra united the disaffected elements which were beginning to channel themselves into independent groups at state and local level. For example, one small party which turned to Swatantra was the Dehati Janata Party which had been founded by the veteran Congressman, Nagoke, as a vehicle for opposing the Nagpur Resolution (Erdman 1967: 113-5). Ranga himself attracted the remnants of the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, a party dominated by Kamma landed interests in the Andhra delta.[16] The most important caste group which turned to Swatantra were the Rajputs, mainly through the Kshatriya associations of N. India which they dominated, such as the Zamindari League in the Punjab, and the Kshatriya Mahasabha in Gujerat.

Thus, although Swatantra was, and is, clearly an alliance of many outlooks and interests, as represented by the contrast between "modern men" such as Masani and Mody, and traditional Gandhians, between Hindu Code reformers and the religiously orthodox, it nevertheless contains a strong contingent of landed interests, almost certainly motivated

by opposition to land reform, or by the Ranga-type argument about exploitation of the rural sector, or by both. This would not be surprising, considering that the original raison d'etre of Swatantra was the alarm generated by the Nagpur Resolution. Erdman reports that ex-princes and landed interests dominate the Swatantra hierarchy in Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, U.P. and the Punjab (1967: 127).

Although now in the late 1960's, Swatantra seems to be somewhat in decline, and the initiative to have passed to separatist parties, such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazaghan in Tamilnadu or the Akali Dal in the Punjab, to the Hindu extremists of the Jan Sangh or the Communists of the W. Bengal United Front, the birth of Swatantra was crucially important in that it represented the first major rightwards defection from Congress and the first incidence of an articulate and united opposition to Congress policy specifically and to the planning ethic in general. By 1962, Swatantra had established itself as the main opposition party in the Lok Sabha. Its recurrent theme has been that it is not anti-planning per se, but only anti 'Soviet-style planning', and in this it has been able to capitalise on the Gandhian tradition. As Ranga said in a Lok Sabha debate, "we believe in a plan. But our plan is a Gandhian

plan, a plan that has for its foundation Dharma, a plan that is based on the initiative of our people, a plan that stands for self-employment and security of our people" (Ranga n.d.: 27).

Industry and the anti-planning ethic. This outcry against government-controlled or 'totalitarian' planning has found a ready response in some areas of industry, where the impact of government controls over the private sector has been felt to outweigh the advantages of large-scale government investments in industry which were initially more appealing. From this point of view, the ideal situation for private enterprise would be to retain the state's role as a builder of infrastructure, but to abolish, or considerably reduce, its control of private enterprise. As in the agrarian policy debate, where both cooperativisation and peasant proprietorship can be 'proved' to be economically desirable, so here too, economic theory can be appealed to for a justification of minimal planning, just as it can equally well be made to supply a rationale for strong central control. Economic theories, as is so often apparent, though often disputed, tend to contain their own value premises, or rather, to be selected for their adaptability to certain prior assumptions.

This point is well-illustrated by a speech made by A. Shroff of Tata's to the Forum of Free Enterprise in 1963, after the Congress had "placed before the country the objective of democratic Socialism". The talk was entitled "Will Democratic Socialism help India?" Mr. Shroff quoted with approval Milton Friedman, "a world-famous economist" who "says of Indian planning 'There is a right way and a wrong way to do most things ... a Central Government which maintained law and order, provided for the national defence, secured people in the enforcement of private contracts freely entered into, provided a stable monetary framework, fostered the spread of elementary schooling and the improvement of road communications, and for the rest, fostered a free market to enable millions of individuals in this country to use their resources in accordance with their own objectives - such a Government would be engaging in good planning" (Shroff 1966: 75). Shroff elsewhere argues that "the edifice of Socialism can be built only in the graveyard of Democracy" (56), and, in the F.F.E. speech, he went on to suggest that, as far as India is concerned, "the answer is provided by the French model of planning ... planning by consent," in which "the plan is a flexible one and is drawn up in consultation

with all interests concerned" (79). One might imagine from this that there were no processes of consultation built into the operations of the P.C., and no scope for interest groups to exercise an influence. This is belied, for instance, by a comparison between the draft and final versions of the 2nd Plan, which shows an upward revision of such allocations as would benefit the private sector of industry.[17] The crux of Shroff's argument is revealed by the pronouncement that "realistic planning would concentrate on providing the infrastructure of the economy" (78).

The centrifugal trend. Thus, in the long term, the policy initiatives of the 1950's seem to have provided both the reason and the excuse for a renewed outcry of vested interests of many varieties, making themselves heard through more distinct and more formalised pressure groups and even parties, and giving rise to a stronger ideological backlash against central planning and the nexus of socialist attitudes of which it is accused of being a part. The 1960's has been a decade in which both Congress and the Government have been put progressively onto the defensive.

Of course this has been a complex process, in which the various aspects of reaction to the planning process itself have by no means been the only element. The rising

tide of separatism has also played a major part, as have external factors such as the Chinese and Pakistani Wars and the disastrous harvests of 1965-7, which certainly made a major contribution to the grind-down of planning. But the growth of separatism has not been unrelated to the problems entailed by the Plans, since tensions between states, and between states and the centre, have been heightened and fed by the distributional decision-making involved. Indeed, the conflict gets sharper as the power balance shifts in the states' favour through Congress's electoral decline. As Hanson puts it, "The allocation process has always been a balancing act, in which political considerations have been weighed against those of economic rationality; the act becomes more delicate as each state develops independent political consciousness" (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 31). Finally, both the growth of separatism and the emergence of anti-planning pressure groups, can be related to the dying intensity of the impetus towards unity which was created by the independence movement. In this sense, the centrifugal trend has been a long-term secular one, which began immediately after Independence, and to which the increased activity and enthusiasm initially engendered by planning provided only an apparent and

temporary check.

One major symptom of the decline in the scope of Government political initiative in the 1960's has been the diminution in the status and power of the P.C.. Since the end of the 3rd Plan there has been somewhat of a hiatus, and planning has been based on three successive Annual Plans, which are "related to the 4th Plan in a rather loose and informal way." (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 4). But the post-3rd Plan period has also seen a reorganisation of the structure of the P.C., which took place in the autumn of 1967. The P.C. was henceforward to concentrate on plan formulation and evaluation and to avoid executive functions. Its status was really to be that of an advisory bureau, and its function as a decision-making body was to be assumed more by the Development Council. This was what critics of the Government had been recommending for a long time. Swatantra in particular, in its anti-statism, had tended to argue that the P.C. was a non-constitutional body and was not properly accountable to parliament.[18]

The growth of "pragmatism". Such structural indications of the decline in power of central Government have their parallels in ideological terms, in that there had undoubtedly been a swing away from the advocacy of relatively

"socialist" measures towards an increasing "pragmatism". Concrete examples of this are not hard to find. In the industrial sector, the clearest case concerns the balance which has been thought desirable between private and public sectors, partly implemented through resource allocation and partly through the degree of control exercised by the state over the day-to-day operation of private enterprise. Emphasis on expanding the public sector was heightened after the 1954 Avadi Resolution, and specifically underlined in the 2nd Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, which stressed that "The adoption of the socialist pattern of society as the national objective, as well as the need for planned and rapid development, require that all industries of basic and strategic importance, or in the nature of public utility services, should be in the public sector."[19] The preference given to the public sector was well illustrated by the relative allocations fixed for the two sectors of the coal industry in the 2nd Plan. Private enterprise had hitherto been dominant in coal-mining, but the P.C. suggested that "the additional coal production required to meet the increased demand during the 2nd Plan should be raised to the maximum extent possible in the public sector" (2nd Plan: 378). This meant in fact that "new mines had

to be established in practically virgin areas" (3rd Plan: 511).

The powers of the state to control the private sector directly were embodied in the Industrial Act of 1951 and the Companies Act of 1956, (Act no. 65 of 1951, and Act no. 1 of 1956), which provided various powers of investigation and regulation, through licensing and registration procedures. Such powers included, for example, possible distribution and price control, regulation of the distribution of profits, the limiting of simultaneous directorships and the right to audit accounts. But probably the most important form of control has been that of entrepreneurial licencing, "for it directly influences the size, shape and purpose of the private sector" (Hanson 1966: 489). This has created an additional problem in that the attempt to influence the overall sectoral balance has become identified with a rather cumbersome and time-consuming bureaucratic structure.

It is such types and degrees of control that industry most objects to. During the 3rd Plan period, they did in fact begin to be loosened. As Hanson approvingly puts it, "As a beginning, industrial licencing has been relaxed, the control of capital issues has been liberalised, price controls

on some sixteen commodities have been removed, administrative arrangements for dealing with foreign investment proposals have been 'stream-lined', and - perhaps most significant of all ... control over the price and distribution of steel has been partly dismantled" (495).

The agricultural sector in the 1960's.

The advance of "pragmatism" in the rural sector has been equally conspicuous. There are at least two indices of this, the first being the decline of interest in co-operation as applied to farming and the disappearance of the 1st Plan's vision of cooperative village management, and the second being the virtual demise of community development and the advent of the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme.

Decline of cooperative village management. The pattern of cooperative village management, as described in chapter 4 above, was outlined fairly fully in the 1st Plan as the ultimate goal for the whole rural sector. Cooperative village management has subsequently not so much totally disappeared as become progressively diluted and dissected, so that the effects are far from what was originally intended. Even in the 1st Plan, the radical nature of the blueprint

was mitigated by the implication that its materialisation would necessarily be somewhat delayed and remote. The only concrete measure which was suggested as a step towards the implementation of the pattern was a scheme of land management whereby large farms were to be assessed and categorised on the basis of their probable post-subdivision loss of efficiency. The radical potential of cooperative village management was also diminished by the fact that community development received a great deal of emphasis in the 1st Plan period. As the Praja Socialist Party argued, community development without prior or simultaneous structural reform was robbed of much of its equalising potential.

Ostensibly, the 2nd Plan period witnessed an increase of enthusiasm for the cooperative principle as applied to farming, and an apparent determination to embark on the process of implementation. With zamindari abolution largely accomplished, attention could be shifted to the advocacy of a ceiling on land holdings and to the process of re-distribution as a precondition for the establishing of universal joint farming. But it became evident during this period that, insofar as cooperative farming was to spread at all, it would do so in a piecemeal and somewhat

uncoordinated way. By the end of the 1st Plan, there had been reported to be 1,379 cooperative farming societies, "a fair proportion genuine ... others in which the object was to escape the incidence of tenancy legislation" (2nd Plan Review 1957). The 2nd Plan period did not succeed in markedly altering the outlook for cooperative farming.

In 1959, after the Nagpur Resolution, a Working Group on Cooperative Farms was set up. Its conclusions were that the spontaneous growth of cooperative farms should be encouraged, and that any compulsory legislation should be repealed. The large credibility and implementation gaps between the optimistic advocacy of universal cooperative farming, the actual policy of encouraging spontaneous and voluntary cooperative farming, and the concrete grass-roots growth of cooperative farming societies, have become increasingly obvious. By the time of the Draft Outline of the still-born 4th Plan, the P.C. was still paying lip service to the Nagpur Resolution, since there is a demand that the cooperative farm "should be looked upon as an important element in schemes for achieving new advances in agriculture" (144). But the draft Outline does not in fact provide much money for cooperative farming, and it is clear that, insofar as cooperative farming does survive as a

component of official policy, it does so very much as a marginal option rather than as a contender for universal adoption.

This has in turn meant that land redistribution, originally conceived as an essential part of the evolution of cooperative farming, has taken on a quite different function. Insofar as redistribution has occurred, it now falls into place as an ameliorative and rather marginal adjustment to the individual proprietorship pattern, and, in this sense, a logical follow-up to zamindari abolition. The whole process of the shift in emphasis in successive Plans has been termed by one commentator, a "regression from agrarian reorganisation to land reform" (Dandekar 1964).

Community Development and the I.A.A.P. The second index of the advance of 'pragmatism' in agriculture is the marked flagging of enthusiasm for C.D., even as remodelled under panchayati raj, and its supercession by the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme. A very important factor in this has been a growing realisation of the urgency of the agricultural situation, and a recognition that, as Mehta has put it, "Agriculture ... is the ultimate core of our difficulties and our problems on the economic front"(1966:

141). The first crisis in confidence vis à vis C.D. led, as was described above, to the reorganisation which was known as panchayati raj, but as Hanson somewhat sweepingly puts it, "anyone with knowledge of the realities of village life and of local politics could have predicted that, whatever virtues panchayati raj might have as a means of political 'socialisation', it would not, at least immediately, do much to promote the economic development of the rural areas." (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 36). Thus the main criticisms of development under panchayati raj took two forms; first that, on its own terms it simply would not work, since the obstacles which had marred C.D. in the first place were not to be cured by increasing local control, and secondly, that in any case it was inefficient to spread resources universally and thinly. This latter argument was taken up particularly by the Ford Foundation, (Report on India's food crisis and steps to meet it, 1959), whose advice was largely responsible for the evolution of the pilot Intensive Agricultural Districts Programme in the 3rd Plan, and subsequently for the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme.

The logic of the scheme is that concentration of resources in receptive areas must represent the optimal

distribution. Lipton suggests that the acceptance of complementary development, as represented by these 'packages of investment', has been largely influenced by the Schultz hypothesis (1964) of the efficient peasant, which makes for the assumption that small injections of new resources will be relatively ineffective. As Lipton points out, the logic of the programme is questionable on many grounds, not least because of the probability that the peasant is generally engaged in seeking a "survival algorithm" rather than a maximisation of production (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 112-7). Another major point for concern must be the distributional effects of the programme, since it explicitly channels resources to areas which are already relatively well-endowed. The aim officially is that they should have a spill-off effect, but this seems a rather remote and unreliable possibility.

Community Development, as originally conceived and implemented, was at least intended to cover the whole rural sector and to distribute its benefits as widely as possible. In practice, it turned out to be distributing additional resources and income very unevenly as between the strata of rural population. While little has been done to overcome this lateral maldistribution, a new element of vertical,

or geographical concentration has now been added to the situation.

It seems inevitable, therefore, that the tendency of these two trends, the decline of cooperative farming and the supercession in priority of the I.A.A.P. over C.D., lies in the direction of consolidating peasant proprietorship as it now stands, even if the occasional cooperative farming venture continues to decorate the margins of agriculture. Cooperative credit, supply, and marketing facilities are of course quite compatible with, and indeed even conducive to, this pattern, since they serve to support and increase the security of the individual proprietor. But they can help the landless labourer not at all, and the tiny plot holder hardly at all.

Conclusion: the ideological cycle.

There is in all this, of course, the acute difficulty of trying to assess whether such changes of emphasis are due to the political elite having, as it were, on their own initiative, learned by experience, or whether it is mainly a case of the left wing within Congress having lost the initiative, especially since the death of Nehru, or whether finally, it is rather the product of the growing weight of

counterveiling pressure being exerted on the Government as a whole by the increasingly articulate pressure groups of a pluralist society. There is no doubt that all three types of factors have been relevant, but it is enough in this context to argue that the swing away from the more ideologically assertive policies of the 1950's has at least been significantly exacerbated by oppositional pressures in the nation at large.

This leaves the way open for the suggestion that the ideology-power situation has come full circle, in the sense that, before independence Congress ideology represented a demand-input vis à vis the Government of India, but Congress has now emerged as itself the receiver of similar demand-inputs from the range of sectional interests in the community at large. In between, it has passed through two stages, in the first of which it found itself as intermediate between the demander and the receiver roles, its task then being to attempt to reconcile the two functions and their ideological counterparts through moderation and compromise. In the second phase, it took a step towards assuming the role of ideological initiator, in which, as the active policy-maker, it attempted to define objectives and priorities and to make use of ideology as a means of implementing these. But this

latter attempt provoked reactions of many dimensions which have had their feedback and have contributed to the nature of Congress's present role as more nearly that of a broker than a policy-initiator.

NOTES. CHAPTER 5.

1. Functionalist theory in particular has been eager to explore the specific role of cultural symbols in maintaining national unity. Myron Weiner, writing of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, suggests that "During the national movement and now after Independence, nationalists in each country have made some effort to utilise religion and other traditional elements as a means of achieving integration." But for India, with its multi-religious community and avowedly secular state, Hindu symbols could not prevail. Hence, "in selecting a national symbol, the leadership turned to the sculptured pillar of lions, the royal symbol of the Buddhist King Asoka, as a symbol drawn from neither Hinduism nor Islam," and "postage stamps portray leaders of all religions" (Almond and Coleman 1960: 242).

2. The resolution included the clause: "the objective of our economic policy should be a socialistic pattern of society, and towards this end the tempo should be stepped up to the maximum possible extent" (Lok Sabha Debates 2, IX, 3692).

3. The 1955-6 Budget has sometimes optimistically been called 'India's first socialist budget'. It included special

taxes for business executives, stiffer income tax, and the promise of substantial deficit financing for development. It was described in the Times of India, 1st March, 1955.

4. The sharpest criticism of the Plan at an official level came from K.C. Neogy, a member of the Planning Commission, who maintained that its magnitude was bound to be inflationary and that "a massive superstructure has been raised on precarious foundations". But Neogy received little support when his views were aired before the National Development Council (Hanson 1966: 140).

5. It can in fact be argued that Indian planners and economists alike have persistently understressed, or even glossed over, the dependence of industrial growth both on a parallel growth in agriculture and on the process of "siphonong off" agricultural resources. This case is put by T. Byres (1969). In the 2nd Plan, he says, "nowhere is it pointed out that in the event of inadequate growth in agriculture the only way to sustain industrial advance is through more effective mobilisation policies" (5). Similarly, in the 1955 joint Memorandum of the Planning Commission's Economists Panel, the fact "that industrialisation might necessitate hardship for the peasant is not observed" (7). Byres concludes that this may be partly due to the

phenomenon of "intellectual attitudes reflecting political reality" (10), but he suggests that the major influence is to be located in the colonial past. On the one hand, the psychological legacy of colonialism has produced "a continuing adherence to the conceptual apparatus of the ex-rulers" (10), which militates against a recognition of sectoral conflict such as is contained typically in Marxist theory. On the other hand, the nationalist response to colonialism produced "a way of looking at economic reality which minimised possible sacrifice" (11).

6. Nehru's presidential address to Congress in Oct., 1951, after the Tandon affair, was, for example, a clear attempt to provide a rallying point after the divisions and conflicts of the previous year. "We have to pull ourselves up", he said, "from mutual recriminations...Let us not attach too much importance to winning or losing an election. If we win a fight within ourselves, then other triumphs will come to us also" (Presedential Address, Indian National Congress, 57th Session: 20-21).

7. The rate of urbanisation has been positive at least since the beginning of the century. In 1901, the urban share of the population was 11%. By 1961, it had risen to 18% (Bose 1965).

8. Byres asserts that: "The works on taxation almost invariably reveal, in the words of one of them, that "Indian agriculture possesses the capacity to pay additional taxes" " (1969:9). But it is politically virtually impossible to raise rural taxation. The U.P. Zamindari Abolition Act of 1950, for instance, eliminated any possibility of greater financial extraction through revenue by freezing the current rates for a period of forty years into the future.

9. The obvious example of an identification of mobilisation' with command economies, is Apter's model of the 'mobilisation system', whose polar opposite is the 'reconciliation system'. These and the intervening types of the 'modernising autocracy' and the 'feudal system' are outlined in The Politics of Modernisation, 1965.

10. The Draft 4th Plan, for example, speaks of the need for "a deliberate strengthening of the national will towards social and economic growth" (33).

11. Sometimes, two types of panchayats were set up and endowed separately with judicial and administrative functions. This was the case in U.P. after an act of 1947. A description of the U.P. system is given in R.H. Retzlaff 1962.

12. These were B.J. Patel (Hon. Sec. Gen., All-India Coop, Union), and R.N. Rana (Registrar, Coop. Socs., Bombay State).

It is interesting that the two members who were involved in the structure of the cooperative movement advised in favour of credit and supply cooperatives, but against cooperative farming. Those who advocated the latter course (the majority of the Delegation), were M.P.'s, a member of the Research Dept. of the A.I.C.C., and a ministerial advisor on cooperatives.

13. This is not to imply that coercive resources eliminate all mobilisation and motivational problems. This is clearly not the case, as the imperfect performance of Soviet agriculture and the persistence of productive private plots indicates.

14. The 2nd Plan set up a Small-Scale Industries Board, to provide facilities for supply, marketing, credit and technical assistance for firms with less than Rs.5 lakhs of capital and fewer than 50 employees. Such subsidies have been criticised on many grounds. Dhar and Lydall, for instance, came to the conclusion that small factories "use more capital and more labour per unit of output than large factories" (1961: 19).

15. The F.F.E. was started in Bombay in 1956 by Shroff of Tata's and Vaidya of the Indian Rayon Corporation. It claimed to be non-political, but took a stand against government

controls and taxation.

16. Details of these small parties which joined with Swatantra are given by Erdman (1967) in his chapter on 'The Swatantra Coalition.'

17. Comparison of the Plan-frame and the Final Draft of the 2nd Plan, shows that the share of public investment in industry and mining was reduced from 25.6% to 18.5%, whilst that for transport and communications rose from 22.1% to 28.9%. Brecher suggests that the development of transport was in the interests of private enterprise because it "could facilitate the growth of private investment in the countryside and would ease the flow of raw materials to the city and the reverse flow of urban-manufactured goods to the rural areas" (1959: 543).

18. Masani, the Swatanta General Secretary, is reported to have siad, "If the Swatantra Party had a chance, its first act would be to liquidate the P.C." (reported in the Statesman: 6th June, 1960).

19. The text of the 2nd Industrial Policy Resolution is to be found in the 2nd Five-Year Plan: 43-50.

CHAPTER 6

Ideology and policy in the states

The importance of state politics.

Many reasons suggest themselves for looking at the course of policy development at the state level during the period since Independence. First, it might be assumed that there is here a direct parallel with the process of policy-formation at the national level. But has it in fact been the case that there has been the same pattern of conflicting and at times mutually-incompatible ideological strands, and the same process over time of ideological thrust followed by oppositional feedback, as has seemed to characterise policy formation at the national level? It is interesting to consider whether the states may be seen as microcosms in this way, or whether there are more distinctive factors at work which prevent the drawing of such parallels.

The second reason for looking at the state level is that it is one stage nearer to the actual implementation of policy locally. This consideration may appear to

represent a deviation from the main theme of the thesis, but this is not really the case, for the process of implementation cannot but have a feedback on the process of policy formation, even if a lag is involved. The process of implementation is particularly important in the case of rural policy. Whilst the major thrust of industrial policy can be executed under the aegis of the central government, as can many of the "chunky" agricultural investments, such as large-scale irrigation works, the actual application of agrarian and agricultural policy at the grass-roots level is to a large degree the responsibility of the states. Even within the framework of the formulated plans, which are partly the product of suggestions by the states, but are largely modified by central priorities and allocations, the federal government is very dependent on the willingness and efficiency of the state governments for the execution of its policies.

This is a great source of frustration for the central government, but at least New Delhi can sometimes employ incentives and sanctions through financial support. At first sight, it would seem to be the case that the proportion of public investment in agriculture for which the centre is responsible has been relatively low since

the 2nd Plan, with only a slight rise again in the proposed 4th Plan, the figures being 83%, 13%, 13% and 22% for the four Plans respectively, which would seem to suggest that the states have exercised a high degree of autonomy over their agricultural investments.[1] However, even the sums which are designated as the states' shares of total public investment, both agricultural and industrial, are in part subsidised by the centre, and this subsidy (for both sectors) has steadily increased from 39% in the 1st Plan to 43% in the 2nd and 62% in the 3rd (Etienne 1968:12). Whilst this increase has undoubtedly been largely prompted by the states' inability to expand their capacity for mobilising finance, it has also given the centre scope for control, however limited, over the execution of policy by means of threats and incentives. At the beginning of 1964, for instance, "the Planning Commission informed the states that aid from the central government would be reduced if funds intended for agriculture and community development were used for other purposes" (Etienne 1968:13).

Maybe this is a slender means of control, and such incidents serve only to indicate the way in which central government subsidies may go astray, rather than the effectiveness of central control over policy execution.

But in the case of land, as distinct from agricultural, policy, not even this degree of control exists. As specified in Clause 7 of the Constitution, the states initiate their own agrarian legislation and are themselves responsible for rural taxation, with the central government confining itself to suggestions. It is therefore necessary to examine legislation at the state level to discover how far the policy initiatives of the centre succeed in percolating downwards. Only thus can it become evident how the grass-roots level has actually been affected by policy. Given the ideological configurations at national level, in the last resort conditions in the village will be greatly affected by the politics of state government, the quality of local administration, and the impact of policy on the distribution of power in the village situation. Having considered the range of intentions and values implicit in policy-making at the various levels, it is then important to ask whether and how things have been tangibly altered for the mass of the rural population. To take a case in point, what material changes have there been for the cultivator?

Politics and ideology in the states.

The first task then, is to consider policy-making at the state or micro level, to see whether it has run in the same grooves of rising and falling ideological intensity, encountered the same ideological contradictions as national policy-making, and to see whether it has reflected the same priorities in terms of content. The general conclusion will be that there are parallels to be drawn between the two levels, but the pattern at the state level is usually a considerably dampened one, for a variety of reasons.

There is one major obstacle which immediately presents itself in the path of such an analysis. This is the contention that the whole language of ideological concepts and alliances does not form part of the currency of politics at any level lower than the national. This is a view which is frequently expressed, and which is typified by Brass's remark, made specifically in the context of U.P., that it is unlikely "that party sentiment or ideology will play much of a role in local politics in India for some time to come, if ever" (Brass 1965:164). What is meant by this, and is it the case that analysis in terms of ideology is quite inapplicable at the state and lower levels?

The influence of factionalism. Brass's remark is made in the course of discussing the role of factionalism and its ubiquitous influence, both in the fabric of government formation and the exercise of power, and as a motivational element in voting behaviour. He is engaged in modifying the assertion that "for the greater part of India ... caste loyalty comes usually before party sentiment and ideological alignments" (Furer-Haimendorf in C.H. Phillips, ed. 1962:65), but only by arguing that factional allegiance creates a further complicating factor which may cut across caste loyalty.[2] One might assume that factional, rather than caste, allegiances would be one stage nearer an ideological type of configuration, since factions might cohere around distinct economic interests and therefore give rise to consistent justifications and ideas about policy. But Brass argues that factionalism has no such consistency of crystallisation, and often occurs for purely personal or nepotistic reasons.

The importance of factionalism from the state level downwards is convincingly demonstrated in Brass's study. At the state governmental level, for instance, he describes the conflicts which arose under Sampurnanand's chief ministership, after Pandit Pant had left for Delhi in 1955.

These conflicts, he argues, were almost solely the outcome of bitter personal rivalry between the two politicians, M.L. Gautam and C.B. Gupta, and "the struggle which began between these two men in 1952 ... has brought disruption and division in the government and in the party, in Lucknow and in every district in the state" (1965:44). Sampurnanand can be argued to have exacerbated the conflict by pursuing a policy of relying first on one of the rivals to the exclusion of the other, and then reversing their roles, but the main factor seems to have been personal antagonism, since it is claimed that "there were no real policy differences between the opposing groups" (48). For instance, when Gautam was enjoying a period of supremacy, Gupta and his followers in the party organisation provoked a conflict over the retirement age of government officials, favouring fifty-five as against the government-favoured age of fifty-eight. The insignificance of the issue is argued to be a measure of the lack of doctrinal difference between the two contestants for power.

Brass supports his assertion that factionalism invades the fabric of all levels of state politics by showing how this particular fission in Lucknow spread its tentacles to the district level through the medium of patronage. Gupta

and Gautam were to some extent able to undermine each other's supporters, and to promote their own, by exercising an influence on the distribution of tickets for local elections. In Gonda district in 1955, for instance, a local rivalry for a Congress Assembly candidature was taken up at state level, very much as local conflicts may be engulfed in the partisan disputes of the big power blocs in the global context. Gautam, who was at the time out of office, "worked tirelessly" on the members of the Central Parliamentary Board and finally succeeded in having the ticket given to his protegé, a relative outsider. This led to the disruption and eventual rupturing of the Gonda District Congress.

Finally, factionalism is held to exercise a major influence at the basic political level of voting behaviour. This is illustrated from the constituency of Barnawa, "the only constituency in the entire state in which the majority of voters belongs to a single caste" (159), since 60% of the population are Jats. In 1962, however, a Jat candidate standing for Congress lost to an independent Rajput candidate. This seems to have happened because the Jat vote was split amongst several Jat candidates. As Brass puts it, "factionalism in the majority community and inter-

caste alliances among the minority communities determined the election outcome."

The overall argument, then, is that in general, political conflict and competition do not actually occur, nor are they conceived as occurring, over matters of principle. Ideology as a set of motivational impulses is hard to find, either among politicians or the electorate. Political allegiances crystallise mostly around personal interests and antagonisms, whether of a factional or a caste nature.

Party support and ideology. Against this account of the situation, several points may be made. The first is that parties, from wherever and however they derive their support, must formulate some sort of political programme, and differences of policy at the state governmental level may be quite consistent with a non-existence of ideological cleavage in the lower ranks of party organisations.[3] However, it is often argued that even party distinctions which at the national level would have some ideological content, at lower levels become merely convenient labels for opposing camps, and that in fact "the party labels are worn and interchanged by factions representing castes, regions or religious groupings or which are sometimes simply

personal cabals around a particular leader" (Maxwell, The Times: 6.1.69).

But if this were entirely the case, if, in other words, there were 'pure factionalism' as represented by an almost completely random distribution of party labels amongst competing factions, then it seems that two things should follow. First, there should be very little correspondence between kinds of people, in terms of social and economic categories, and the kinds of parties which they support or attach themselves to. Secondly, there should be little correlation between party labels and the kinds of policies advocated.

It must surely be the case that this is too extreme an account of Indian state, if not of district and village, politics. Social analyses of voting behaviour do show some evidence of connections between economic and social position and party identification, even if caste and communal loyalties do act as cross-cutting and intervening variables. Hardgrave (1966), for instance, in a study of the Nadars of Tamilnad, comes to the conclusion that this community has passed through several stages of political cohesiveness. In their original toddy-tapping environment, in which they were numerically dominant, politics took place

within the community and between factional client groups. In their later urban setting in Ramnad, the Nadars were in a minority and politics became primarily a facet of caste-solidarity. Finally, Hardgrave maintains, with long-term urbanisation in cities such as Madurai and Madras, the Nadars have reached a stage of internal differentiation, fanning out over a range of occupations. There appears now to be no "Nadar vote" as such. The mill-workers are more likely to vote Communist together with workers of other castes, than to vote Congress, as do many Nadars of more professional status, whilst the young are attracted by the Tamil nationalism of the D.M.K.. Caste, in other words, has been replaced by economic, generational or regional solidarity as the main moving factor. If the Nadars have voted more solidly for the D.M.K. since this was written, as seems likely, it is presumably more probable that they have been caught up in a general swing rather than that they have returned to a caste consistency of voting.

Brass's study also offers evidence that the support of parties is not wholly on a factional basis, or rather, is not wholly ideologically-arbitrary within a factional framework. In his description of the break-up of the

Gonda Congress in 1955, he reports that the disaffected Raja of Mankepur who had previously controlled the local Congress, and who had been crossed by the repercussions of the Gautam-Gupta conflict, mustered his allies to stand as independents in the by-election which had precipitated the conflict and in the subsequent Elections of 1957. But finally, in 1959, and in the first year of its formation, the Raja and his followers joined Swatantra. It seems more than coincidental that a Raja who had retained 2,000 acres of land even after zamindari abolition, should end up supporting a party whose raison d'etre was to oppose the Nagpur Resolution, and all that it seemed to entail of government intervention in the agrarian structure.

If, then, there can be said to be at least some evidence that the group or class support of parties is far from being completely random, even within a factional framework, there are also indications that, conversely, a party cannot be unaffected by the nature of its support. In this context, Bailey's description of party politics in Orissa is interesting. It seems that the Orissa Congress, at least in the 1950's, rather than beginning to disintegrate, actually absorbed a wider range of interests and extended its social base in an attempt to stave off electoral defeat.

Its main rival has been the Ganatantra Parishad which flourishes in the ex-princely-state hill areas. In 1956, Congress leaders were so alarmed at the growing strength of this party, that they "healed the breach between themselves and the rentier class ... and important individuals in the rentier class were given Congress tickets" (Philips 1963: 99). Furthermore, in 1959, the strategy of self-defence and alliance led to an actual coalition with the Parishad, which, as Bailey puts it, "is commonly labelled 'feudal reactionary' " (1959: 187).

The interesting point is Bailey's conclusion that this shift or extension in the social base of Congress support must necessarily be reflected in Congress attitudes. "My own opinion," he says, "is that this Coalition will speak for the middle classes, and by its creation the territorial cleavage of East and West has been replaced by a class division, which may eventually become a class conflict when the peasants are better able to present their case in the democratic forum" (Philips 1963: 100).

Ideological cleavage between parties and programmes. Counter examples to the case of the Raja of Pankepur could no doubt be produced of landowners, especially perhaps in Bengal, aligning themselves with one or other wing of the

Communist movement, and it would clearly be impossible to argue that there is either consistent or widespread identification of social and economic interests or opinions with what might be termed the "expected" political labels. Brass implies that a major confounding factor is the personal nature of Indian politics, which means that "a politician may join a 'socialist' faction, not because he has any ideas about Socialism, but because he admires certain characterisitics of the leader of the faction - characteristics which have nothing to do with ideology" (1965: 34).

The most that can be suggested is that there is at least sometimes some degree of coherent differentiation of interest between parties or between elements of their supporters. Therefore, in order to argue that parties at the state governmental level do exhibit some differences of policy preference which tend towards the manifestly ideological, it is not necessary to argue that such values persist in total disjunction from the social make-up of party support. It can instead be argued that the political differences between parties are probably nourished and reinforced only to the extent to which they do represent distinguishable cleavages of interests and opinion among

their supporters and, more importantly, their representatives. Because factionalism is so rampant and because it more often overrides and blurs, rather than reinforces, such distinctions, the impulse towards doctrinal distinctness between parties is considerably weakened.

However, if there is even a degree of differentiation of interests behind party labels, this makes it more likely that they will exhibit different policy preferences. And even those writers who argue most forcefully that Indian local politics is faction-ridden and therefore not in any coherent sense ideological, are prepared to speak of governments formed by "coalitions from every shade of political attitude", albeit "brought together only by antipathy to the Congress Party and the desire to share the fruits of office" (Maxwell, The Times 6.1.69). However arbitrary and fluctuating the coalitions, it still seems that some kind of substantive ideological spectrum emerges and can be identified. This point is further illustrated by Neville Maxwell when he argues that the 1969 mid-term elections presented an interesting prospect because "This time it seems likely that the state Congress Parties will agree to join coalitions; then at last it will

be seen which way Congress jumps - or splits - when it has to choose between left and right."

Altogether then it would seem too sweeping to argue that any ideological analysis is impossible in state and district politics. Whilst the conventional ideological cleavages and distinctions may not hold good as cognitive and motivational elements, particularly at the lower levels,[4] and may quite often not serve as distinguishing criteria between the personnel of parties because of other and cross-cutting ties, nevertheless there is still enough coherence for parties at the governmental level to carry a recognisable political and ideological complexion, and for it to be possible for this to manifest itself in influences on concrete policy-making. It is with this level of governmental participation by parties and politicians that we are most concerned in considering the appropriateness of drawing a parallel between national and state policy formation.

Changes over time.

Another point to be made in qualification of the argument that state politics must be seen as non-ideological, is that allowance must be made for change over time.

Independence itself has initiated processes which have affected the fabric of politics and its orientation towards or away from manifestly ideological conflicts. Again, this is an aspect of Indian regional politics which is not infrequently discussed, but most often in the context of political "development". This is largely because the growth of participationary politics is seen as an index of modernisation, even if one which may have the by-product of enlarging the gap between the so-called mass and elite cultures in India. It is worth looking at such discussions to discover whether they are dealing with processes which may have repercussions on the ideological content of politics. They may also suggest something about the fluctuation of ideological initiative in the states since Independence, which may be compared with the rise and fall of initiative at national level.

The two cultures approach. Myron Weiner, for example, identifies the two political cultures which operate at different levels, as, on the one hand, the predominantly but not entirely 'traditional' politics of the district, which reaches out to state level also, and, on the other hand, the predominantly but not entirely 'modern' culture of the national leaders and planners of New Delhi (Pye and

Verba 1965: 199). The contention is that the increasing role of government, the dispersion of political power through panchayati raj, and the operation of parliamentary democracy, have provided the stimulus for an increasing intensity of activity at both levels, but also for a growing gap between the two, as their confrontation only serves to emphasise the difference between their perspectives.

It is argued that the expansion of village politics has contributed to the emergence of a mass political culture, signified by the high participation in elections and avid competition for office. Weiner contends that this is primarily a burgeoning of "status politics" though he does admit that the access to resources, both formal and informal, which office brings, is an important factor. The scope for patronage and bribery is increased and so, whilst participation in politics grows, so does sectionalism and political cynicism. This in turn produces a common critique and disdain a ongst the modern and nationally-based elite, which expresses itself in opposition to communalism, in resentment at the allegedly disappearing spirit of dedication at lower levels, and in annoyance at the failures of planning implementation at the local level (226-35).

Movement of leaders. Forrester (1966) pursues a similar argument in examining types of political leadership in India. He argues, however, that it is not only increasing activity and contact between the two levels which has led to their more marked divergence, but also the fact that Independence intensified the siphoning off of a particular type and vintage of leadership from the states to the national government. This left a vacuum which has been subsequently filled by new-style "micro-political" leaders who are more insular in outlook and who are primarily interested in state and district politics as an arena for enlarging their own power.

Most members of state legislatures, he explains, are now rural by origin and have most often been brought up in their own constituencies and so have many local caste and kinship ties. In consequence of this rural shift, educational standards within the legislatures "have fallen considerably" and caste considerations have become more and more important. National politics, by contrast, functions in a more coherent and less fractionalised way primarily because there is still at this level a fund of educated, urbanised and more cosmopolitan leadership. The gap between the two cultures has become more evident not only because

the scope of government has widened, so raising general rates of political participation and heightening the long-existent contrast between the nature of traditional village politics and modern central government, but also because the pull of central government has actually deprived the states of some of the leaders who might otherwise have exerted a stabilising and more politically sophisticated influence.

Since it tends to be assumed in these accounts that part of what distinguishes the modern orientation of central government is the fact that alignments occur at least not infrequently along lines of interest or ideological solidarity, and since it is also contended that a stratum of relatively modern-oriented leadership has been drawn away from the state level, there would seem to be grounds for the assumption that there has been a change in the nature of state politics over time. If its 'ideological content' is now low, this must be seen against a background of secular decline or, less pejoratively, shift.

Leadership in U.P. This again ties up with Brass's description of the course of U.P. politics since Independence. As noted above, he is committed to the view that ideological

analysis is hardly applicable in contemporary state politics, but he explicitly sets the dividing line at Independence, arguing of the pre-Independence period that "Divisions between 'modernists' and 'traditionalists', 'secularists' and 'revivalists', which seemed important then, hardly occur within the Congress party today" (1965:34).

This is held to be largely traceable to the fact that "political leadership in U.P. passed from the hands of the prominent leaders of the nationalist movement from this state into the hands of the second rank of party workers" (33). Pre-Independence leaders are seen as divisible into the ideal-types of modernist (Jawaharlal Nehru), traditionalist (Purushottamdas Tandon), ideologist (Acharya Dev), virtuoso politician (Rafi Kidwai), and arbiter (Pandit Pant). It is contended that several of these types have gradually become extinct, with the modernists, traditionalists and ideologists disappearing first, followed finally by the last of the arbiters when Pandit Pant went to Delhi. This has left the field almost entirely to the virtuoso politicians, such as Gupta and Gautam. The new regime is characterised by the "rise of party men to government office", and an "increase in the frequency and intensity of internal factional quarrels" (50), in which "neither ideological nor policy

issues are involved" (52). Altogether, and in spite of the attempted congress reorganisation under the 1963 Kamraj Plan,[5] "it is personal politics with a vengeance" (55).

That this has indeed been the case and that it has had repercussions for planning implementation and for the administrative structure is confirmed by Etienne. Writing of the weaknesses of the U.P. administration, he suggests that "To act effectively the administration needs to feel itself supported by the cabinet at Lucknow, but the latter has been so racked with dissensions since the departure of Pandit Pant in 1954 that it is at the mercy of political intrigues. The administration is usually subordinated to the short-term interests of local leaders" (1968: 181).

The curve of ideological initiative at centre and state.

The combined effect of these various accounts of the course of state politics in general, and of U.P. politics in particular, is to build up a picture which would seem in many ways to be in direct contrast to the development of national politics. Whilst the latter has been characterised by an increasing crystallisation of interest groups which have served to help check the ideological initiative

of the Government through their articulation of anti-planning and anti-structural-reorganisation ideology, the state arena seems to have witnessed a total shrivelling of ideological debate. It seems that it is not a case of rival or conflicting ideology, but of no ideology at all. There has been ideological disintegration, rather than segregation and crystallisation.

For many reasons, this stark contrast is misleading. It dichotomises Indian politics in an unreal way. Whilst there are of course salient differences between national and regional levels, these are not so extreme as to prevent parallels being drawn. In many ways, the states have experienced a modified form of the course of national politics. But because there have been exaggerating or depressing factors, as well as leads and lags in time perspectives, and some features which are unique to politics nearer to the grass-roots, the parallel has often been obscured. It remains to try and spell out this parallel.

Congress decline. First, it is certainly the case that, as at the national level, so in many of the states also, there has been an exodus from Congress of extremes of opinion which, until Independence, were retained within it. In U.P., the earliest pivots of opposition were the

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Jan Sangh, both of which were founded by people who had "either no past association with the Congress or who had only slight associations with the Congress" (Brass 1965: 24). But the Socialist Party and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, which amalgamated in 1952 into the Praja Socialist Party, and later on, Swatantra, all either issued directly from splits in Congress or drew support from former Congress personnel. With the emergence of Swatantra, the range of at least theoretically differentiated segments of the ideological spectrum was, as at the national level, fairly complete.

This meant that increasingly the area of political middle ground was left to Congress. With the shedding of extremes, there was likely to be less scope for ideological conflict within Congress itself. This may be one reason why the old kinds of dispute, which Brass finds typical of the pre-Independence Congress, became rarer and why non-policy bickering grew. As Brass points out, it was precisely because there were "no real policy differences" (48) between the intra- and extra- Government Congress factions in the mid-50's that such trivial issues as the retirement age of officials had to be picked upon as bones

of contention. In fact, after the departure of Pant, the "new Sampurnanand ministry was composed almost completely of the old group of Congress Socialists who had remained in the Congress" (46). Moreover Gautam, who was at first excluded from the ministry and consequently became the leader of the major extr -Government faction, had himself been a founder member of the C.S.P. in U.P..

It is thus arguable that the growth of factionalism, both within Congress and in state politics generally, has been but one aspect of the decreasing dominance of Congress, another aspect of which has been the multiplication of parties and the segregation out of ideological view-points which this implies. The two processes have fed and exacerbated each other, for the passing of the older generation of politicians who derived their perspectives and their stature from the Independence movement has been accompanied also by a decline in the charisma of Congress. In general, the buttresses to loyalty have progressively been undermined, and secession madeeasier, whether it is for reasons of ideology, such as caused the resignation of the twelve C.S.P. Members of the L.A. and the exit of most of the socialists from the U.P. Congress in 1948, or for reasons primarily of personal pique or ambition, such as in

the case of the Raja of Mankepur.

This has meant that the final range of parties produced is a mixture of those which are ideologically relatively specific, and those which are mere excuses for opposition, and this is certainly a feature which is more characteristic of state than of central politics. However, after two decades of independence, the major contestants in the U.P. elections of 1969, besides Congress, were the two main Communist Parties and the Jan Sangh, which between them would surely seem to represent a considerable polarisation of political opinion.

The pace of the splintering process. The second way in which the fanning out of state parties and interest groups has differed from that at the national level, is that it has been a more gradual and continuous process, and one which in some states at least, began earlier. Not surprisingly perhaps, Congress has always received a higher percentage of votes and seats in the Lok Sabha than in the state Assemblies as a whole, but on the contrary, and presumably because of the distribution of voting in constituencies, the other all-India parties have always done better in the states than at the centre, in terms of seats, though not of votes.[6]

This would suggest that, insofar as national parties have emerged to challenge Congress in the Lok Sabha, they have done so partly by picking up support and forming a series of bases in the local context. Non-Congress politicians in the states have either attached themselves to distinctively local or regional parties (such as the D.M.K. in Madras or the Akali Dal in the Punjab), or they have provided a source of potential support for the all-India parties. Such support has been potential because it has often gone through a transitional stage of apparent independence before accepting the title of the larger national body. An example of this, besides the above-mentioned Raja of Mankepur, is the case of S.K.D. Paliwal, a Gandhian who left the U.P. Congress in 1951 and formed the Indian Progressive Legislative Party which later merged with Swatantra.[7] The national parties, and in particular Swatantra, can thus be said to have capitalised on the splintering process which has been going on in the states since Independence, and this, as the electoral figures show, has applied particularly at the level of candidates and politicians, as opposed to voters.

This means that the curve of Congress decline, in terms of governmental power, has in general been straighter

and more continuous in the states than at the centre. It would of course be naive to suppose that politcal power in the states depended solely, or even mainly, on electoral results in terms of the number of seats gained, since the control of patronage is clearly a major offsetting and strengthening factor in the face of electoral decline. Brass even maintains that "A local Congress organisation may lose every Assembly seat in a district and still retain its power as long as it maintains its hold over government patronage and district administration" (1965: 227). But it may be that this is only a practicable process at the district and village levels through the structure of panchayati raj and with the weight of Lucknow's support in the background. There is clearly a threshold at state level, beyond which the machinations of patronage cannot hold out, as the instability of state Congress Governments and their areas of influence since the 1967 Elections, has demonstrated.

The course of policy. Against such a background, the role of ideology in policy formation at the state level might be expected to have been both less pronounced and less varied than at the national level, and this does seem to have been the case. Because of the early growth of factionalism and

the change in the nature of leadership, the "ideological spurt" of the mid-50's, although reflected in an increase in the scale of planning and a build-up of planning administrative machinery in the states, often does not seem to have represented a "peak" or a "big push" in the way that it did at the centre. Consequently, although in the long term there has been a decline of Congress in the states and a splaying out of interests similar to that at the centre, this has not appeared as a major couter-impulse, largely because any marked contrast with earlier initiatives was missing.

Factors unique to the states. Other factors specific to the state situation have of course combined to flatten the curve of ideological crescendo and couter-attack. For instance, because the state governments occupy a janus-like position between the centre and the districts, much of their energies are inevitably taken up in bargaining[8] or in lodging complaints about failure of subsidy and supply, and they therefore cannot or do not, concentrate single-mindedly on schemes for expansion and mobilisation. The somewhat resentful tone of the U.P. Annual Development Plan for 1959-60, is not untypical. Speaking of the gap between New Delhi's and Lucknow's proposals for the state's share of

total outlay, it comments, "It has been represented to the Planning Commission that the amount of Rs. 22.3 crores is the maximum to which, with effort, the State can stretch itself, and that the gap of Rs.1.2. crores may be filled by the Government of India. But no final decision has been taken and the matter is still under negotiation" (7).

Another factor which is bound to influence state policy and sometimes increase resistance to central plans, must be the particular stage of development of the state concerned. InU.P., this has certainly increased the non-congruence between the pattern of priorities in the national and state plans. As far as the sectoral allocations between industry and agriculture are concerned, it is clear even from the official figures that there has been a different balance. U.P.'s natural orientation towards agriculture, and the fact that it seems to be unfavourably placed for industrialisation,[9] have meant that, in the first place, the agricultural allocations have been proportionately larger than the national ones, and secondly that they suffered a smaller decline from the 1st to the 2nd Plan, namely one of 4.5% as against 22.5% in the national plans.[10] The difference between agriculture and industry was even more marked in terms of actual spending, rather than targets. As the

Progress Report on the first part of the 2nd U.P. Plan pointed out, "the balance left over in the last two years under the head, 'industries' namely Rs. 969.55 lacs, is far in excess of the expenditure incurred in the first three years, viz, Rs. 673.82 lacs" (1959: 2). Altogether, the thrust towards heavy industrialisation has been missing in the U.P. Plans.[11] This has meant that a particular ingredient in the ideological thrust at the national level, had almost no counterpart in U.P., again contributing to the flatness of the curve of policy-initiative.

But if the total curve has thus been muted, there still has been a rise and fall of ideological initiative. All the blunting factors cited, such as the decline in the quality of leadership, the growth of factionalism, and the particular problems and perspectives of U.P. itself, have not prevented this. Moreover what peak there was (at least in terms of agrarian policy) seems to have occurred, as will emerge later, at the beginning of the 3rd Plan or the end of the 2nd, well after Pandit Pant's exit and the demise of the 'good old regime'. It is of course difficult to assess the strength of determination which lay behind the legislation of 1960, since this can only be deduced from the Act itself and the tone of the

planning literature. But it does seem that, although the intensity and the time-scale may be different from the course of national policy, the basic pattern is still discernible.

Ideological contradictions and U.P. policy.

Even if it must finally be concluded that ideology and policy in U.P, have not followed such a marked rise and fall of initiative, or been so clearly divisible into stages, as at the national level, it can certainly be said that they have conformed to the latter's pattern in terms of continuing ambiguity of intent and internal contradiction. The distinct and often conflicting influences of nationalism, socialism, social-democracy and Gandhism, have all been in evidence and have all born fruit to some extent in tangible aspects of policy. It now seems apposite to take the specific case of U.P. land policy and follow its development and effects in order to try to deduce from these the ideological factors which have been at work. This may provide evidence both of the multiplicity of ideological influences at work, and of the rise and fall in Government initiative.

Agrarian policy in U.P. As far as state legislation is

concerned, the scene has been dominated by the original Zamindari Abolition Act of 1950. After this there was no major land legislation until the Imposition of Ceiling Act in 1960. Since land redistribution was a principle which was in practice rejected by the Zamindari Abolition Committee (Z.A.C.) at the beginning of the decade, this would seem to represent a major new departure. And indeed, as with similar legislation in other states, it was an echo of the socialistic push of the 2nd Plan and, in particular, of the Nagpur Resolution. What is unclear is the extent to which this was foisted onto the U.P. administration by pressure from Delhi. The tone of the U.P. planning literature referring to the renewed emphasis on cooperative farming was certainly fairly enthusiastic in its own right, and U.P. had made relatively radical gestures before the 1960 Act, such as the imposition of a Large Land Holdings Tax in 1957. But in any case, however indigenous the enthusiasm at the time, the long-term fate of this particular ideological push would seem to be similar to that at the centre.

Again as with national policy, the long-term outcome directs attention back to the early legislation and suggests the possibility that the conflicts of aims and priorities

which have dogged agrarian policy were equally evident then. It is therefore necessary to analyse the aims of the early legislation, to consider its implications and effects, and finally to trace some of the continuities with later legislation.

Zamindari Abolition. U.P.'s Zamindari Abolition Act is now almost two decades old, and sufficient time has elapsed for many assessments of its effects to have been made.[12] It would seem most useful, therefore, to concentrate on the problems which faced the Z.A.C. and the U.P. legislature, and to analyse the values which were implicit in the policies proposed. This will of course entail considering some of the effects of the legislation.

As pointed out in an earlier chapter, there seems a good case for supposing that attention came to be focussed on the institution of zamindari partly because of its connections, and those of some of its encumbents, with the British. The nationalist movement, almost in spite of Gandhi, came to see the abolition of the zamindars as an issue of social justice, and it became a liberative slogan. However, once the Z.A.C. was set up, which occurred in 1946, it attempted to bring within the compass of its task the whole range of agrarian problems. But it did this more by

polemics and by arguing the wide implications of this one reform, than by enlarging the scope of its proposals.

In its chapter on the case for abolition, for instance, it adduced a considerable range of justifications, including general social justice ("Any system under which the land is concentrated in the hands of a few persons means the degradation of large numbers who have less or none of it": 341), the specific details of concentrated ownership ("804 landlords out of a total of more than 20 lakhs own anything between one fifth and one quarter of the land of the province": 343), on grounds of revenue ("the State's share in the revenue collected has progressively decreased": 345), the continuing ejection of tenants, and finally, on grounds of efficiency and productivity, since "the power and domination of the landlord have resulted in a lack of incentive in the cultivator and in the prevention of intensive cultivation."

Problems confronting the Z.A.C. But however widely and imaginatively the case is argued, it is clear that zamindari abolition by itself could only effect a small proportion of the problems posed by the rural situation in U.P.. To see this, it is necessary to look at the state of land ownership and distribution. Here, the problems can

be classified under four headings. First, the structure of holdings had become immensely complicated, with a range of types of tenure, and with, in some cases, layers of rent-collectors or intermediary interests between the state and the cultivator. Secondly, there was of course a highly skewed distribution of land-ownership, both vis à vis the population of cultivators at large, and within the category of land-owners. The Z.A.C. figures show that the 804 large zamindars cited above constituted 0.04% of the population of zamindars and only 0.0014% of the total population of U.P.

Thirdly, there was a maldistribution of <u>access</u> to land, quite apart from ownership of it. At a conservative estimate, the Z.A.C. reckoned that 37.8% of all cultivators had holdings of 1 acre or less, and between them held 6% of the total area of holdings. Even those holding 5 acres or less, (81% of cultivators) had access to only 30.8% of the land cultivated (Z.A.C. 11., statement 5: 6). The fourth major problem, implicit in this latter one, was the fragmentation of holdings. Studies of individual villages show how acute this problem has become. Etienne, for instance, reports that in the village of Khandoi in Western U.P., what were 47 holdings in 1916, had become, in

less than 40 years, 116 (1966: 66). As with the skewed distribution of ownership and of access to land, this is a problem which is more acute in some areas of the state than others, a fact which dealing in averages tends to disguise. If anything, this makes the series of problems more intractible, since regional inequality is added to so many other forms.

Against this range of problems, the Z.A.C. Report and the subsequent legislation of 1950 brought few weapons to bear. The problems which they did directly tackle were those of the rent structure and the maldistribution of ownership. Briefly, they did this by abolishing the institution of zamindari and vesting all land in the state so that, except for a small category of permitted tenants, all land payments became revenue paid to the state. This meant that the majority of holders acquired some form of ownership right. There were to be two types of ownership interest in land. The first, bhumidhari, was a full ownership right, and the second, sirdari, was a restricted right, in that it excluded the possibility of alienation. But sirdars were enabled to acquire bhumidhari rights to their land, or parts of it, by payment of a sum equivalent to ten years' revenue, which also entitled them to a 50%

reduction in the payment of revenue. Thus the class of bhumidhars was to be made up of two categories, bhumindhars by conversion, and bhumdhars by acquisition. The 1950 Act did also attempt to do something about the problem of fragmentation by setting a theoretical "floor" for holdings at 6 1/4 acres. But this was a rather nominal gesture. The problem was better served by subsequent consolidation measures,[13] but neither of these moves could possibly have any effect on the basic and allied problem of the acute land shortage.

What then were the motive forces and the implications of this initial attack on the agrarian structure? What can be deduced about the intentions of the legislators, and the visions they entertained for the future rural pattern of U.P.?

Zamindari abolition as a liberative measure. First, it must be said that the Act was to some extent, as it claimed to be, a move against the entrenched power of the large landowners and was thus in a sense "liberative", and perhaps even socialistic. This intention is indicated first by the fact that the bulk of Congress propaganda was directed against the stereotype of the large avaricious exploiting landlord, or as the Z.A.C. put it, "the large

landed aristocrats" (344). Since, as Singh and Misra estimate from their sample of districts in U.P.,[14] about 66% of zamindars owned less than 5 acres of land, this represented a very obvious choice of emphasis. Although the catchment area of the Act was much wider, Congress chose to emphasise its purpose in dispossessing the large land-owners of their rent-collecting rights.

This was not of course, entirely or only, an altruistic move on Congress's part. As Reeves points out, Congress was also motivated by a desire to liquidate the landlords as a source of political opposition (n.d.:1), and this naturally suggested that the force of the attack must lie where the nexus of the power lay. As Reeves also suggests, the fact that Congress took the trouble publicly to attack the U.P. Zamindars Union, an association of large landowners set up in 1946 under the leadership of Sir Jagdish Prasad, shows that it was regarded as a threat, not only over the specific issue of abolition, but in terms of general political power (n.d.:9).

As it was the large landholders who objected most to the idea of abolition, so it was they who mostly attempted to prevent is implementation and this too might be read as evidence that the Act was making more than token gestures

against the large landed interests. Between May and July of 1949, when the billwas being presented in the Legislative Assembly, the U.P. press was full of the zamindars' alternative suggestions, such as that "the Government might as well bring a short bill enablin, the tenants to acquire proprietory rights by paying ten times their rental to the landlords directly" (Singh 1949: 13). Because of filibustering by the zamindars during the bill's 2nd reading, the guillotine finally had to be applied and the President's assent was given in January, 1951. However, it was another eighteen months before the Act could begin to be im lemented, as the zamindars initiated another campaign of litigation.[15]

Compromise with the zamindars. If the Act can thus be said to have had socialistic and liberative overtones, in that it was directed against private rent-receipt and against the power of the large landlords, this impulse was inevitably tempered by other and less radical considerations. First, it was in fact a very blunt tool for undermining the power and status of the zamindars, for it allowed them to retain all their home-farm land, their 'sir' or 'khudkasht', and this left several landlords with "a thousand or two thousand acres of land" (Brass 1965: 12).

Secondly, although tenancy was theoretically to be illegal, crop-sharing was to be permitted. Thirdly, the personal cultivation of land was to include cultivation through servants or hired workers (Progress of Land Reform: 54). These were considerable loop-holes, and they meant that the only tangible way in which the large zamindar was penalised was through the future non-receipt of rents. But here too, the zamindar's loss was to be off-set by compensation, though a degree of egalitarian discrimination was exercised in that, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, rehabilitation grants were paid on a sliding scale. Nevertheless, the whole concept of compensation clearly stemmed either from a basic liberal respect for property rights or from a social democratic belief in the virtues of voluntary or peaceful change, or from a combination of both. Over this, the Congress was at odds with both the communists and the socialists, who both demanded that abolition should take place without compensation (Singh 1959: 139-42 and 151).

Classes of ownership. The second query which must be raised in connection with the Zamindari Abolition Act concerns the degrees of ownership recognised. Why indeed should there be two classes? It was true that the superior

right was, in theory, accessible to the former occupancy and hereditary tenants who now automatically became sirdars, but the scales were weighted against them in several ways.

First, the original intention of this provision was clearly to provide a mechanism for funding the compensation to be paid to zamindars. Before the Act came into operation, a Zamindari Abolition Fund had been started, to which the payments for bhumidhari rights were to be credited. The aim was to reach a target of Rs. 140 crores, which would only be attainable if 4/5 of those eligible paid their lump sums (Moore and Freydig 1955: 107-8). It soon became clear that methods of intimidation were being used, such as threatened eviction or suspension of patwaris who failed to raise sufficient funds. As Moore and Freydig put it "techniques used in the collection drives combined propaganda, the provision of special facilities and direct official pressure ... The most zealous officials went further ... On the advice of village patwaris, summonses were issued to any substantial tenants who were slow in making their payments" (33).

It seems unlikely that such scope for abuses could not have been foreseen by the instigators of the fund. The effect was to make the acquisition of ownership rights into

a kind of forced buying-out of the zamindars, or at least a forced loan for this purpose. Here again, Congress met opposition from the Left. In November, 1949, the Socialist Party led a kisan demonstration against the Zamindari Abolition Fund collections (National Herald Nov. 25th 1949). Slogans used by the socialists expressed such sentiments as "The zamindars have a lot of money, why give them more?"[16]

The second way in which the scales were weighted against the sirdars' access to full ownership rights was the method by which the payment was to be related to the revenue reduction. The 50% reduction, after payment of a sum equivalent to 10 years' revenue, meant that there was no real pay-off until 20 years had elapsed. In the shorter term, it could be interpreted as the receipt of a 5% rate of return on the original deposit, but this was of no real advantage since "a cultivator can always lend in the village at a much higher rate" (Moore and Freydig 1955: 108). Indeed, Etienne reports that village moneylenders usually charge 36% a year (1968: 93).

All this has combined to produce the result that bhumidhari rights have expanded only slowly. Etienne reports that one of the major incentives is the desire, or the need, to sell land. Thus a sirdar may acquire

bhumidhari rights to a piece of his land merely in order to be able to sell it and obtain ready cash (59). Over the period since the Act, the proportion of land on which bhumidhari, as against sirdari, rights are held has certainly increased, the change in the ratios being from something under 1:4 in 1950, to roughly 1:2 as an average for the years 1957-1960.[17] Baljit Singh reports that an unpublished Lucknow thesis estimated for 1956-1957, that 57.7% of bhumidhari land was held by right of conversion, whilst the remaining 42.3% was held on acquired rights (1961:20) a proportion which corresponds well with what could be deduced from the above ratios.

However, to calculate on the basis of the ratios of the acreages under bhumidhari and sirdari is rather misleading, and Singh and Misra (1964) uncovered some revealing data when they analysed the situation in terms of the principal tenures of households. There were slight regional variations, but the main differences appeared, not surprisingly, amongst occupations and castes. Amongst 'farmers', for instance, 40-47% were bhumidhars, and the remaining 53-60% sirdars, but only 7% of the households with land rights amongst the agricultural labourers were bhumidhars, whilst 76% were sirdars, and 16% asamis (tenants)

(122). They pointed out that "as we descend along the occupational ladder or the caste hierarchy the percentage of households having bhumidhari as their principal tenure declines. Since bhumidhari was acquired partly by conversion and partly by payment or purchase it is obvious that the less prosperous or the more indigent could not acquire bhumidhari interest to the same extent as farmers and the upper caste Hindus, whose holdings at an average were larger, and who seem to have benefited relatively more in the process of conversion and had also a larger capacity to acquire it by payment than others" (133).

Surprisingly enough, however, the data did not yield significant correlations between bhumidhari acquisition by payment, and factors such as the proportions of land under irrigation, double cropping or commercial farming, which would be expected to be associated with the capacity to pay. On the other hand, a large majority of the sample households, when questioned about their non-acquisition of bhumidhari, gave inadequacy of cash as their main reasons, and the Rural Credit Survey Reports of the Reserve Bank, as Singh and Misra point out, have certainly indicated that there is a shortage of savings amongst cultivators.[18] Nevertheless, Singh and Misra conclude that "the political

and social factors were perhaps more important than the economic ones in the acquisition of bhumidhari rights." Whatever the precise mechanism, therefore, it is clear that in the attainment of bhumidhari rights, not only has there been a bias against the whole class of previous occupancy and hereditary tenants, as against the old zamindars and holders of proprietary status, but there has also been a marked difference of access within this former class, with those of lower caste and occupational position experiencing a relative disadvantage. Ownership rights have certainly been extended, but by no means indiscriminately, and not by as great an extent as was originally envisaged. It is possible, of course, that the Z.A.C. miscalculated and that total ownership was never as appealing or as psychologically stimulating as they imagined, but there was clearly an element of disincentive built into the legislation itself which has almost certainly reduced the attraction or the accessibility of full ownership.

The redistribution of land debate. Turning now from the question of ownership to that of access to land, the Government's attitude to the possibility of redistribution must be considered. As was argued earlier, stages of land reform may be regarded as ends in themselves or may be

considered as steps in the attainment of a more remote final state. In this light, redistribution may be advocated either as a social justice means in itself or, as happened in China, as a prelude to collectivisation, but the Z.A.C. adopted neither argument. Having cited a good deal of evidence which illustrated the uneven distribution of land as well as the maldistribution of ownership, they did consider the case for redistribution and even acknowledged that "The redistribution of land would reduce gross disparities in agricultural incomes and thus make for social justice" (386), but in the end they were deterred by the difficulties.

Certainly there would have been great problems and restrictions involved in any such programme. On the basis of their study of six representative districts, for instance, the Z.A.C. came to the conclusion that, even ignoring the large number of plots under 5 acres, 118 lakh acres of land would be required to make the holdings of between 5 and 10 acres up to a standard size of 10 acres, but a ceiling of 25 acres would yield only 6.7 lakh acres of land (388). An additional obstacle cited was that redistribution was "likely to arouse opposition among the substantial tenants and increase the difficulty of zamindars in adjusting

themselves to changed conditions." The conclusion was that redistribution was not to be recommended.[19] Here again, Congress was at odds with the socialists and communists, as shown by their 1951 Election Manifestos (Singh 1961; 151).[20] As Neale puts it, the Z.A.C. argument shows considerable deviousness, with "radicalism in philosophy and realism about U.P. politics somehow combining to justify a policy of leaving the status quo undisturbed" (1962: 273).

The 1960 Ceiling Act. It is interesting that by 1960, the U.P. Congress had arrived, at least in theory, at a different outlook on redistribution, for the Government introduced and passed, albeit "without much enthusiasm" (Etienne 1968: 65), the Imposition of Ceiling on Land-holding Act, which basically limited a holding to "40 acres of fair quality land" (Progress of Land Reform:67). This was a repercussion of the Congress Nagpur Resolution of the previous year, and represented, as far as U.P. was concerned, a peak of initiative and an echo of the central ideological impulse of the 2nd Plan period. In fact, Baljit Singh has argued that a limit of 15 acres would be more appropriate and more effective (1961: 65). At this level, more than 4 million acres or nearly 10% of the state's

cultivated land, would become available. But the 40 acre limit could release only about 1.3% of the total cultivated area, and in practice, the prevalence of evasion through parcelling out and claiming exemption on such grounds as the mechanisation of farming, has considerably reduced the amount of land actually surrendered. It seems that both the amount declared potentially surplus, and that actually regained, provide ground for controversy. Against Singh's percentage, which works out at about 5.2 lakh acres, Nanavati and Anjaria report that 1.4 lakh acres was actually declared surplus (1965: 215). If these figures are correct, it means that exemption was claimed on one ground or another for nearly 4 lakh acres between the passage of the Act and the declaring of the surplus. Furthermore, Nanavati and Anjaria give as the figure for the amount of land actually redistributed, 24,000 acres, which is no more than 17% of the officially declared surplus.

The 1960 Ceiling Act is interesting, not only because it seems to be part of the "peak" of U.P.'s curve of ideological enthusiasm but also because it sheds light on the continuing conflict which has permeated the U.P. agrarian structure debate. This again reflects the ideological conflicts which have occured at the federal level,

and which were described in earlier chapters. It concerns the ultimate pattern to be aimed at, and is epitomised by the various notions of the role of cooperation. If the aim is total cooperativisation of agriculture (i.e. joint farming of some kind), then the purpose of a ceiling is either to level off the size of holdings before they are grouped into cooperatives, or else, as Baljit Singh argues, to release enough land in the short run at least to enable a sizeable number of cooperatives to be started on the surplus. On the other hand, if the aim is to retain individual proprietorship and cultivation, and therefore to restrict the role of cooperatives to service and credit functions, then the imposition of a ceiling is an end-in-itself gesture towards equity, a purpose which any particular level of ceiling will serve to some degree. Such a measure is not dissimilar from the imposition of a progressive income tax, in that it aims at piece-meal reform and redistribution, the only difference being that it establishes an absolute limit, since land, unlike income, is a fixed resource.

In the light of this conflict, it might be supposed that the 1960 Act should be interpreted more in terms of the purely redistributive and welfare kind of purpose than in

terms of the prelude-to-cooperativisation intention, since the prospects for universal joint farming seemed to have been growing increasingly remote in the intervening period since Independence. On the contrary, judging from the evidence of the planning literature, the Act does seem to have been accompanied by a rise in official enthusiasm for cooperativisation. However, the Ceiling Act was certainly not generally accepted as a logical step towards cooperativisation and the long-term effects seem to have totally destroyed any such conjunction. Because cooperative farming has not flourished and spread, it has again wilted as a candidate for universal adoption and the ceiling legislation has fallen into place almost as a kind of substitute. It has re-emerged as an end in itself, so that in the event, it has possibly even helped to entrench individual proprietorship and cultivation as the established norm, rather than facilitating its dissolution in favour of cooperative farming.

Thus a strange three-stage process has taken place. First, whilst firmly rejecting redistribution, the Z.A.C. advocated universal joint farming. "The ultimate solution of our problem," they said, "lies in the development of cooperative joint farming" (527). Secondly, the U.P.

Government, after an interval of ten years, adopted redistributive measures, apparently as a corollory to its renewed enthusiasm for cooperative farming. Finally, the scope for joint farming has again begun to seem limited, and the existence of a legal and theoretical ceiling on land has taken on the function of supposedly modifying, and thus strengthening, the old pattern of individual proprietorship. The overall trend can perhaps be deduced from the progress and fortunes of the cooperative farms themselves, as distinct from the degrees of enthusiasm for them which have been manifested by successive state plans.

Cooperative joint farming. In 1949, the Z.A.C., in pursuance of what it saw as a long-term goal, recommended "a modest beginning in the shape of small cooperative farms spread over different parts of the province so that their advantages may be demonstrated to the cultivators" (527). Consequently, by the end of the 1st Plan, 202 farming societies were in existence, and the target of 100 new farms had been exceeded. But the Plan Review (1957) spoke of them, rather more equivocally, as experiments and gave as the rationale, the fact that "The cooperative method of farming is considered as the best means to do away with

uneconomic holdings and (provide) rapidly increasing production" (11). The 2nd Plan again set a target of 100 new farming societies and it was explained that "for undertaking these experiments ... adequate financial assistance in the shape of subsidies and loans and concessions will be required" (Ann.Dev. Plan 1957-8: 26) but signs of implementation difficulties appeared during the first three years and the Annual Development Plan for 1959-60 reported that progress under the heading of Cooperation had "for various reasons, been slower than originally envisaged" (3).

After this period of set-back, it does seem that there was a rise of enthusiasm for cooperative farming in the U.P. administration in the years immediately after the Nagpur Resolution. In the 1st year of the 3rd Plan, "30 pilot projects with 125 farming societies were set up as against a target of 30 projects with 100 societies" (Ann.Report 1961-2: 11). There was again a greater emphasis on the democratic effects, and the possible diffusion, of cooperative farms. Their receipt of preference in the allotment of financial and technical assistance, for instance, was justified in the hope that they would "work successfully and serve as radiation centres for the sound growth of

cooperative farming in the State." But the revival seems to have been short-lived. In the all-India context, it can only be said that "in fact the movement remains limited and cannot be said to have had any marked influence on production. Of some 5,000 societies established between 1961 and 1966, many are hardly working and must be strengthened in order to be at all effective" (4th National Plan: 143-4).

Ideological continuity and change. In a retrospective review of land policies such as this, the question must inevitably arise of the extent to which the later developments were implicit in the original 1950 Act and the Z.A.C. Report which preceded it. Was it the case that subsequent trends were largely determined by these early foundations? There are many ways in which such suppositions would seem to be correct, not only because the 1950 Act created a new set of conditions and so affected the impetus or incentive to further change, but also because the early legislation betrayed sets of conflicts and ambiguities which could hardly be expected to disappear. In this sense, the 1950 Act and the later trends have been joint products of the same complex of influences.

The ideological conflicts evident in the Z.A.C. Report

are the same as those which occurred at the national level, and can be traced to similar clashes of interests and perspectives. The nationalist movement focussed attention and opposition on to zamindari as an institution, but the middle-class nature of the leadership created a sympathy for the notion of proprietorship. The Gandhian phase of Congress development provoked a general sympathy for peasant grievances, but again the stratification and division of interests within the movement militated against a whole-hearted identification with peasant grievances, let alone with the real rural proletariat, the landless labourers. The inevitiable engrossment of Congress with constitutional debates and negotiations in the years before Independence, meant that socialism, insofar as it did penetrate to an official level, did so in the form of imprecise formulas and slogans. Furthermore, an aura of tactical vagueness was bound to pursue these policy objectives because of the predominance of the social democratic over the Marxist strand of ideology within the socialist camp. This was reinforced at the strategic level by the Gandhian emphasis on consensus and voluntarism, and at the content level, by the Gandhian stress on the incongruous or seemingly anachronistic elements of anti-mechanisation and anti-

centralisation. These could often only be accommodated within policy-slogans by increasing the level of abstraction and ambiguity of the latter.

The Z.A.C. Report bore precisely the same kinds of hall-marks. It was radical in theory and looked towards a completely restructured utopian rural pattern in the future, but in the present, it showed signs of what can only be interpreted as considerable sympathy for the medium and small zamindar and the substantial peasant. The Report was eager to point out that "Congress has always been anxious to safeguard the interests of the smaller zamindars," and cited as evidence the fact that "In the United Provinces Tenancy Act, 1939, the Congress Ministry exempted landlords paying Rs. 250 or less as annual land revenue from the provisions limiting the area of sir and imposing other restrictions." Again, speaking of attempts which were being made by large zamindars to convince the smaller zamindars that it would be in their interest to oppose abolition, the Report announced "we have no doubt that the smaller zamindar is possessed of too much patriotism and intelligence to be duped by others" (344).

No doubt such remarks can be explained away as a tactical device to ensure support for abolition, and to

smooth the passage of the bill. But it is unlikely that this was their sole purpose. At least some sections of Congress saw the purpose of the whole operation as being the attempt to create a "huge class of strong opponents of the class war ideology" (Singh, 1956: 41). Even if this was not the conscious aim on the part of all the framers of the Act, many of its ingredients were bound to contribute to such an effect. The extension of ownership, combined with its somewhat selective dispersion, and the lack of land redistribution could hardly do other than lay the foundations for the emergence of the "rural petite bourgeoisie" of which Hanson speaks, a circumstance which was aided and confirmed by the effects of the National Extension and Community Development programmes, and the structure of panchayati raj.

The spurt of enthusiasm for land ceilings and for the extension of cooperative farming which occurred around 1960 and which is represented by the arguments of Baljit Singh (1961), in many ways seemed doomed to failure even at the time, since it was a push against the tide of previous and continuing trends. The other side of the debate is represented, and has been for some time, by the sometime Minister for Agriculture and "the leading ideologist in U.P.

of the peasant proprietor" (Brass 1965: 139), Charan Singh. In his latest book, he sets out the case against cooperative farming, arguing strongly from the ground that "whatever emphasis may be placed upon the differences between a co-operative farm and a collective farm, so far as internal working is concerned there is, and there can be, no difference" (1964: 139). It follows that the establishing of joint farming would lead inevitably to a degree of authoritarianism and bureaucracy which would "undermine the very foundation of our nascent democracy" (vii).

As far as land redistribution is concerned, Singh argues that this should have been carried out only through the mechanisms of economic forces, the imposition of a large land-holdings tax being allowed to force the inefficient large farms to reduce their size. Redistribution under the auspices of the state has merely served to arouse land hunger amongst agricultural labourers and artisans, and has also meant that "in the class conflict so unleashed, various political parties will try to outbid each other in the matter of fixing as low a ceiling as possible ... and the Communist Party, which aims at collective farming, will be the gainer" (183).

The recurrent theme in Singh's writings is support for

peasant proprietorship of a traditional and not a contrivedly egalitarian, kind, but backed by credit and service co-operatives, and this is based on an appeal to democratic values. The message is that "It is farmers' cooperatives, where the identity both of the farm and the farmer will remain unimpaired, that are needed, not cooperative farms" (450).

The implementation of such a pattern could of course have been the immediate and logical aim of zamindari abolition, and some sections of opinion, including Charan Singh, always saw it as such. In 1949, Charan Singh was arguing that "cooperative farming ... cannot be forced on the people wholesale" for, if it is, the result "may be 'compulsory collective' farming but you cannot call it cooperative" (1949: 11). It was clear at the time that Singh saw in the pattern set up by the 1950 Act, a viable permanent structure. He argued against the practicability of land redistribution, but claimed that "for generations past, the peasant has been dreaming to see the day when he will be able to call the land his own; that dream stands fulfilled today ... He will part with all he possesses, even the ornaments of his wife in order to become a Bhumidhar" (7).

However, the Z.A.C. Report, many within Congress, and certainly the socialists and communists, entertained other

visions for the future and imagined other and more idealistic paths of progress. It took the attempted push of the mid- and late 1950's to make it clear precisely how much opposition the prospect of joint farming and the pattern of rural society associated with it, could provoke, and how difficult it would be to implement any such major reform. There is in Charan Singh's writings an echo of the anti-"sovietism" and the anti-statism of Ranga and Swatantra, and there is a considerable gulf between this and the tone of the Z.A.C. Report. To the extent that such views have gained ground since 1960, it may be supposed that their growth represents the ideological backlash at state level, which in itself makes for a reflection of the downward curve of governmental ideological initiative which has occurred at the centre. To the extent that such parallels can be drawn, it would seem that there is scope for analysing the relationship between policy and ideology at the state level, even if it must be admitted that some parts and levels of the fabric of state politics are much less amenable to analysis in ideological terms.

Notes. Chapter VI

1. Based on figures from Etienne 1968: 12. Whilst relative shares have altered, it is of course the case that total absolute public investment in agriculture has risen steadily from Plan to Plan, the figures being; Rs. 2,842 mill., Rs. 5,670 mill., Rs. 10,680 mill., and Rs. 24,100 mill., respectively. The Central Government percentage for the 1st Plan thus appears disproportionately high given the low overall total as compared with subsequent Plans.

2. Several other writers have supported the contention that appeals to caste loyalty can seldom dominate an election. Mayer writes "I suggest that a candidate cannot win through the manipulation of any single relationship; he must fight on several fronts and thr ugh workers having qualifications all of which he cannot himself possess" (Philips 1963: 123). Bailey also argues: "Leaving aside legal considerations, there are structural factors which make it difficult and dangerous for a candidate to rely too greatly or too openly on caste loyalties to get his votes for him" (Philips 1963: 105). Amongst such factors cited are the fact that castes are seldom numerically dominant in a

constituency, that castes are subdivided into factions, and that caste associations are seldom strong enough to provide organised support.

3. As Bailey puts it, "there is not homogeneity at all levels; the issues which are at stake in state politics have to be translated into something else at constituency level and have to be translated yet again at village level" (1959: 232). Citing an example from the context of Orissa, he describes how "the Ganatantra-Congress conflict at State level appears in the guise of rival policies; ... in the constituencies of Kalahandi district it appeared as a dynastic dispute; in Bisipara it was translated into caste conflict."

4. Again as Bailey puts it, "I do not think that the voters are much concerned with their candidate's attitude towards China and the border question, or where he stands in the conflict between socialism and private enterprise. It is enough that he is a local man and an energetic man" (Philips 1963: 103). And also: "the kinds of issues for which parties stand as yet mean nothing to the peasant voter, and even if they did, there is still the physical barrier of poor communications" (1959: 137).

5. This was a suggestion in 1963 that some Congress

ministers should resign office to take up Party work. Morris-Jones describes this as "the kind of renunciation gesture which could be expected, first, to restore the public repute of Congress in the face of Bhave-Narayan and general criticism about the sin of love for power" (1964: 177). In the event, six Central Ministers and six state Chief Ministers resigned.

6. The relevant figures are as follows: (taken from Morris-Jones 1964: 163-4)

	% Vote		% Seats	
	Congress	A.I.P.'s	Congress	A.I.P.'s
1952	45.0 (42.2)	26.1(25.6)	74.4(68.4)	10.0(11.8)
1957	47.8 (45.0)	28.8(25.2)	75.1(64.9)	11.0(15.5)
1962	44.7 (43.7)	38.0(35.0)	72.9(61.3)	17.2(23.5)

Unbracketed figures, Lok Sabha. Bracketed figures, State Assemblies.

The All India Parties are the P.S.P. (S.P. and K.M.P. in 1962 combined), C.P.I., S.P. (1962), Jan Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha, Republican Party of India, Ram Rajya Parishad and Swatantra (1962).

7. Paliwal had for fifteen years been either President or General Secretary of the U.P. Congress, and had been a

member of the State Cabinet. After leaving Congress in 1951, he led a group of Independents (between 20 and 25) in the Assembly. According to Erdman, he is a "very staunch anti-socialist, anti-communalist and anti-aristocrat." He brought to Swatantra "a modest semi-organised group of supporters" and decided to join it because for him, "it represented a combination of Gandhism and modern capitalism ... with too much of the latter for his liking" (1967: 113-4).

8. As Hanson puts it, looking at it from the centre's point of view, "The allocation process has always been a balancing act, in which political considerations have been weighed against those of economic rationality; the act becomes more delicate as each State develops independent political consciousness ... Wisely, it (the Planning Commission) has refused to lay down firm and unambiguous principles of allocation, thereby giving itself maximum freedom in State-by-State negotiations" (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 31).

9. This is sometimes attributed, a little dubiously, to the fact that U.P. suffers from a lack of "the enterprising spirit that is so characteristic of the Punjabis, who have always been ready to set up all manner of workshop

or factory", and , more concretely, to the fact that U.P. has few natural resources and experiences difficulty in attracting investment, having a per capita investment rate of Rs. 67.34 (3rd Five Year Plan), the lowest for all India (Etienne 1968: 48-9).

10. The 1st and 2nd Plan U.P. figures for Agriculture, Community Development, Irrigation and Power, were 62% and 57.5% as against 44.5% and 22% at the national level. (Based on figures from Etienne 1968: 46, and Streeten and Lipton 1968: 86).

11. The output of Industries and Minerals in U.P. increased by 4.3% from 1951-1961, as compared with 48.8% for all India. (Etienne 1968: 47).

12. For example, studies or accounts by: Baljit Singh (1961), Singh and Misra (1964), W.C. Neale (1962), Moore and Freydig (1955). A very interesting assessment also was that made by Wolf Ladejinski in his study of tenurial conditions in several areas of India. His judgment on the U.P. reform was relatively favourable. As compared with Bihar, Madras, Madya Pradesh and Punjab, "only in Uttar Pradesh", it was concluded, "has a well thought-out comprehensive legislation been enacted and effectively implemented" (1963: 10).

13. There had been various provisions for voluntary consolidation in U.P. before Independence, but the U.P. Consolidation of Holdings Act of 1953 provides for compulsory consolidation wherever the government decides it is ready to undertake such measures. The procedure and rate of progress is described by Neale 1962: 264-7. The Ladejinski Report also comments on the U.P. consolidation programme: "By the summer crop of 1963-4, the work is scheduled for completion ... The impact of this programme was quite apparent to us in villages where consolidation had been completed a couple of years ago" (1963: 40).

14. The sample was a random stratified one. 25 districts out of a total of 47 were selected, with probability proportional to size. Similarly, 61 villages were selected from the paganas. Finally, a 10% sample of bhumidhars and a 5% sample of sirdars was taken.

15. Details of the litigation are given in Moore and Freydig (1955: 39-43). By February, 1951, about 7,000 petitions had been filed challenging the validity of the Act and applying for writs of mandamus, under Article 226 of the Constitution. Cases were heard both in the Allahabad High Court, and the Supreme Court. The judgment against the zamindars was finally given in May, 1952. On July 1st,

therefore, the estates of the zamindars were officially vested in the State.

16. This is quoted from some unpublished field notes of McKim Marriott, for Oct., 1951, as cited by Moore and Freydig 1955: 31.

17. These figures are based on a comparison of Moore and Freydig (1955) with Singh and Misra (1964). The former report that the 1950 Act created bhumidhari rights on 8,591,000 acres and sirdari rights on 30,316,000 acres (17). The latter report that the later period showed bhumidhari rights on 15,119,000 acres and sirdari rights on 29,953,000 acres (110).

18. The initial Rural Credit Survey found that, in just over 64% of its sample villages in 1951-2, the average outstanding debt of cultivating families was higher than Rs. 200, and in over 47%, it was higher than Rs. 300 (I, table 2.2.1:69). Defining gross savings as "the owned resources used for expenditure on direct capital formation, on acquisition of a capital asset, or for lending or for repayment of old debts," the Survey showed that the average sum of gross savings for all rural families was just over Rs.155 (I, table 13,1: 733). The comparable debt figures for the years 1956 and 1957, as revealed by the Follow-up

Survey were 50% and 75.5% of cultivating families with debts over Rs.200, and 36.1% and 56.2% over Rs. 300 (table 2.4: 38), the increase in debts over the year probably being due to the combined effects of adverse weather conditions and increased developmental expenditure.

19. Of course, there are many economic and efficiency arguments against redistribution, but the Z.A.C. did not rely on these.

20. Singh maintains, however, that it was only the socialists who had a concrete plan for redistribution, and that this was largely because the communists were wary of antagonising the richer peasants, in which respect they were closer to Congress and the Jan Sangh than they were to the socialists. But by 1959, at least, the communist-dominated A.I.K.S. was demanding a ceiling of 20 acres (Krishna 1959: 307).

C O N C L U S I O N

The aim of the thesis, as defined in Chapter I, was two-fold; on the one hand to examine the specific ideological factors which had influenced both the development of agrarian policies in India and the range of attitudes manifested towards them, and on the other hand, to attempt to decide how relevant to an understanding of this process were some of the varying sociological analyses of ideology.

Models of ideology. As far as the latter aim is concerned, it soon became apparent that no one type of approach to ideology could adequately characterise the relationship between ideology and policy, or potential policy, in either the pre- or the post-Independence period. This was not necessarily a criticism of these particular types of analysis, each of which may well cater adequately for an analysis of specific aspects of ideology or for an examination of particular kinds of connection between ideology and the environment. Psychological or social psychological theories of ideology, for instance, may be geared to explaining the mechanisms of attachment of individuals to going ideologies

and may therefore be most interested in ideology as a cosmological reflection or rationalisation of individual and social insecurity. There is no reason why such an approach should have much to say about the substantive implications of ideology for the concrete execution of political power. But it may nevertheless be the case that an examination of this extended role of ideology can utilise some elements of a social psychological approach. The examination of psychological menchanisms may not, by itself, suggest much about policy, but in combination with other kinds of approach, it may have a part to play in explaining the role of ideology in the wider context.

Thus the Geertz description of ideologies as "maps of problematic reality" and the Apter emphasis on their security - and solidarity - promoting functions were seen to be interesting from the policy point of view only if further questions were asked about the power background to the psychological processes involved. This really meant enquiring to what extent, and how appropriately, social psychological theories could mesh with interest or power-axis theories of ideology. The kinds of questions which needed to be asked were: how extensive were the bonds of solidarity which underpinned the growth of nationalism in

the pre-Independence period and which groups did they encompass; to what extent were the sentiments of unity autonomously experienced or deliberately promoted? Was the tendency towards the minimisation of conflict over domestic policy issues a spontaneous product of nationalist sentiments or was it part of the strategic armoury of a nationalist movement with professed goals? To what extent did socialism reinforce the solidarity-promoting forces, and to what extent was it a threat to them?

These queries apply even more strongly in the post-Independence period when it becomes evident that emotional appeals to national unity and cooperation are manifestations of the government's attempt to coordinate individual motivations with the larger dictates of social and economic policy for development. It seems to be the case that the experiencing of such sentiments was seen by the government as one of the behavioural prerequisites for the successful implementation of planning. Also in the post-Independence period, the potentially divisive effects of socialism become more apparent, particularly in the debates over the role of private enterprise in industry, and over the desirability of land redistribution and cooperativisation in the rural sector. But paradoxically, it also becomes

clear that socialism may be diluted or reshaped to fill a less divisive mould. This is the process whereby socialism has been accused of becoming an orthodoxy in India, of showing itself to be merely the innocuous welfare-statism which may be a "natural" offshoot of modern industrial organisation.

If this is the case, then the apparently unity-promoting effects of socialism differ in the pre- and in the late post-Independence periods. In the former, socialism was certainly potentially divisive, as the Congress ministry - Kisan Sabha conflicts and the debates of the mid-50's have shown. Insofar as pre-Independence socialism seemed relatively non-divisive in its contribution to political statements, this was largely because it was overshadowed and dominated by the various influences of nationalism. In the 1960's, on the other hand, socialism has changed its connotations. In the sense in which 'everyone is a socialist now', the doctrine referred to is certainly not one which rests on class conflict, but rather one which seeks to ameliorate and mitigate class conflict through the mechanisms of the welfare state. It is not any more that socialism is over-shadowed by the strategic ends of nationalism, but that socialism has appeared more widely in its diluted form. There is of course also a militant and undiluted brand

of socialism still in evidence, mainly in the communist camp. But socialism in the weaker sense of a widely-professed and apparently consensual set of attitudes, may, and is even quite likely to, coexist with strong pressure groups and vested interests which are in fact able to exercise considerable influence on domestic policy and distribution. Yet again, therefore, the consensual and apparently solidarity-promoting aspects of ideology need to be examined in conjunction with the ways in which it may be related to the going power-structure.

Thus no single type of explanation of ideology and its role is adequate for considering the relationship between ideology and policy, first of all because the relationship is always a complex one and reliance on one kind of theory enhances the danger of oversimplification. But there is a second way in which reliance on one kind of theory would be limiting, for it appears not only that several kinds of approach may be simultaneously complimentary, but also that the relevance of different kinds of theories or models may vary over time. In chapter 4 and subsequently, it was suggested that ideal types may be constructed for the role of ideology in various types of political situations, and that such ideal types might be applicable to successive

phases of policy-formation in India. It seems that, in these successive phases or models, it is some kind of power-axis characteristic of ideology which in each case is the salient one, with other aspects such as the social psychological and constraint ones as secondary.

Ideology and policy in India. Turning then, to the concrete conclusions about the relationship between ideology and policy in India, it may be said that two themes have emerged. On the one hand, there is the constant rivalry between opposing, or at least partially incompatible strands, such as for example, the conflicts between nationalism and socialism, between Marxian socialism and democratic socialism, between socialism and Gandhism or conservatism; all of which have produced elements of inconsistency and ambiguity in policy statements and intentions. Secondly, the rise and fall in the relative emphasis placed on these various ideological strands may be related to changes in the overall power situation; in other words to the developing and changing role of Congress. It is this which has brought about the succession of shifts in ideological gear and which makes evident the changing relevance of the ideal-type explanations of the role of ideology in policy formation referred to above.

Four broad phases may be distinguished.

In the pre-Independence period, Congress ideology was mainly describable, in Easton's terms, as a demand input. It was dominated by the major aim of winning successive degrees of political power from the British, and other aims and interests had to be subordinated to this. But in fact this major aim largely coincided with the interests of the professional middle classes and with those of the landlords, insofar as the latter were not already directly allied with the British. The prominence of these interests tended to coincide with, or to work in the same direction as, the effects of a unifying nationalism, in that an avoidance of conflict and divisive issues served both to stave off challenges from other groups, such as the Trade Unions and Kisan Sabhas, and, more officially, to retain the tactical unity of the movement. Insofar as these challenges were made, albeit under middle class leadership, the official Congress ideology began to reflect the emergent conflict, in that policy resolutions became both more radical and more all-inclusive and conciliatory.

This trend heralded the onset of the immediate post-Independence phase of Congress development and a shift in emphasis of the relationship between ideology and policy.

With the coming of Independence, the dominant demand aspect of Congress ideology was lost, and Congress became rather the mediator between the range of unleashed pressure groups which on the whole remained within the party, but which exercised an influence on policy and policy possibilities. The ideological justifications which accompanied policies reflected this mediating role, whether itwas the socialisation of the vacuum in the industrial sector, or the eclecticism and the utopianism-combined-with-practical-second-best of the 1st Plan's vision of cooperative village management.

The mid-'50's, however, mark the onset of another phase, in that there seemed to be an upsurge of initiative on the government's part. At this point the converse ideal-type to that which describes ideology as a demand input flowing from the governed to the governing, becomes relevant. This is the characterisation of ideology as an extension of instrumental power in the hands of the politically dominant. The govermment in this situation uses, or attempts to use, ideology as a didactic tool to underpin the implementation of policy and as a stimulus to general cooperation with government action. The increasing emphasis on socialism in the mid-'50's thus manifested itself in a statement of proposed policies, a set of justifications for them, and

a series of exhortations designed to enlist support for them. There were factors in the situation itself which conduced to this kind of government initiative, such as the eagerness of industry for expansion and an enlarged superstructure, the high aspirations amongst the elite for economic development generally, and the eagerness of state administrations for increased local benefits, but there is no doubt that the policies of the mid-'50's and the attitudes which accompanied them were symptoms of Congress and government assertiveness.

But the very process of increased ideological initiative on the government's part sparked off reactions which again produced, or contributed to, a change of ideological emphasis and a shift in the power balance. Newly distinct and vocal oppositional groups have emerged to challenge government policy. Hanson suggests that such interest groups are not yet formally accommodated in the process of policy formation and that what is lacking in Indian politics now is an advanced "bargaining culture" (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 53). At the back of this remark there would seem to be a vision of the archetypal pluralist society with dispersed and counterbalancing foci of power. But even if as yet such a structure is not formally or effectively in existence, this

does not seem to prevent the pressure groups concerned from tangibly influencing policy. Indeed it may be, as Hanson also suggests, that interest groups which do not achieve "legitimation " become alienated and consequently more hostile, more threatening and therefore perhaps in the long run more effective.

The 1960's then, has been a decade of government defensiveness and, in many ways, of withdrawal from the attempted policy goals of the 1950's. The demise of joint farming and of community development are the prime examples of this in the rural sector. Government policy and the ideology which informs it have moved back to a position of relative passiveness, with Congress acting more as a broker and mediator than as an ideological initiator.

In general terms, this pattern of rising and falling initiative, even if in a less extreme form, has been reflected and repeated at the state level, as chapter 6 tried to show. What is not clear, and what can hardly become clear without a more detailed examination of recent state politics, is the extent to which the pattern was purely a reflection of the national level, or whether it was more substantially shaped by factors indigenous to the states. Necessarily, state administration must be largely influenced by New Delhi. The

interesting point is whether or not priorities and programmes can really be foisted onto state level by the centre. However this may be, it does seem that the policy initiatives of the U.P. government have followed a roughly similar course to those of the national level.

Ideological shift or ideological decline? The trend of Congress ideology and policy since Independence may thus be seen in terms of a parabola, a rising and falling curve of initiative, feedback and decline. Precisely how this shift of emphasis is to be described raises again the fundamental problem, referred to in chapter I, of the way in which ideology itself is to be most usefully defined.

On the one hand, there is a tendency in some quarters to describe the change as a movement away from ideology and ideological solutions. Whilst it is clear what this argument is getting at, it can easily lead to fallacious conclusions, for it is often implied that the movement is away from ideology and towards a value-free pragmatism. This seems to be the assumption in many of Hanson's remarks. Parts of the 4th Plan Draft Outline, it is argued, show a "new realism" (Streeten and Lipton 1968: 39), as compared with the old "idealogically-inspired panaceas" (37). But there is still, he suggest, a tainting element of idol

worship left. The I.A.A.P., for instance,"has had to make its way against a great deal of prejudice based upon near-superstitious respect for the Holy Trinity of collectivism, democracy and equality" (37). There is a clear implication here that ideology and pragmatism are somehow dichotomously opposed.

This kind of conclusion can surely only be reached if ideology is defined in the narrow and pejorative sense referred to in chapter 1. It can then be assumed that policy is either guided by a manifest set of political prescriptions, which are typically rigid and all-embracing, or else it conforms to the dictates of economic rationality. There are ways in which this dichotomyis obviously spurious. First, there is and can be no absolute criterion of economic rationality. Even if agreement is reached that data ought to be collected and evidence referred to, the interpretation of the material may still be controversial. Concepts of economic rationality are themselves based on types of economic theory, and economic theories tend to contain differences of assessment which are not totally reducible to"factual" disagreement. Milton Friedman's definition of good economic planning as a governmental concentration on infrastructure construction and a refraint from interference

in anything else, differs markedly from other possible definitions of efficient planning. Again, the evidence about the performance of Indian agriculture since Independence led the Ford Foundation team to conclude that the criterion of economic efficiency dictated a package programme, a recipe whose rationality has been challenged on several grounds, as for example by Lipton, as referred to in chapter 5.

The second, and connected, objection to the supposed dichotomy between ideology and pragmatism is that no policy, whatever its derivations and criteria for selection, can be value-free in its implication. The I.A.A.P., whatever its claims to economic rationality, cannot disclaim the evaluative implications of its effects. It may of course be argued that the inegalitarian effects are unintentional, but they must surely have been foreseeable.

If these objections to the dichotomy are accepted, then it seems the conclusion must be, not that there has been a movement away from ideology and towards pragmatism, but that there has been a shift in ideological emphasis, a movement from one kind of ideological adherence to another. One is then committed to the view that ideology, by definition, is virtually ubiquitous, since policies which are neither influenced by value judgements nor carry value implications,

are hard to conceive. This definition of ideology is closer to Apter's concept, in "The politics of modernization", of the general political values or normative elements which underlie and characterise the authority systems of types of polities, than to his definition of ideology proper as explicit political doctrine. It is also closer to the definition of ideology which was provisionally accepted in chapter I above.

But whilst the assertion that there has been a change of ideological substance or emphasis rather than an abandoning of ideology in toto, would seem to be the more valid description of the trend of Indian policy since Independence, it nevertheless seems a rather weak and crude conclusion, and one which does not fully describe the nature of the changes which have taken place. The gap can surely only be filled by examining the origin, impetus and nature of the ideological content of policy, which has been the intention here in describing the course of Congress development and the "curve of ideological initiative". This allows scope for the suggestion that the ideological content of policy since Independence has not so much declined absolutely, but has rather gone through phases of what may be called relative activeness and passiveness, depending on whether and to what

extent the government could act as the initiator, or whether its main function was to act as a receiver and mediator of demands from groups and interests in the country at large, and increasingly also from the wider circle of foreign advisors and creditors.

This is certainly not intended to imply that there is some kind of inverse correlation between ideological influence and the representation of interests, or between acting on ideological grounds and on those of interest, a suggestion which Bailey appears to make in discussing Orissan politics. A "Survey of Orissa politics", he says, "brings into relief the high degree of moral activity in the more mature democracies. 'Moral' here has a special meaning: it is any activity done for its own sake, including habitual action, without close calculation of immediate material profit. In this definition, the man who votes Labour because he believes in Socialism, or votes Liberal because he believes in Free Trade, is acting morally" (1962: 27).

On these grounds, one would virtually have to be acting contrary to one's own interest in order to be accepted as acting "morally" or in conformity with a specified ideology, almost as the Kantian prescription seems to demand action in defiance of interest as evidence for having done one's

duty. But it would surely be unhelpful and downright misleading to define ideology and ideological motives only as the residue remaining when all elements of interest have been discounted. A good deal of the fascination in discussing the nature of ideology, as it is manifest in individuals or governments or policies, lies precisely in considering its relationship to whatever range of interests may be relevant, as in the case of pre-Independence nationalism.

Hence there are ways in which both the assertion that there has been a decline in the ideological content of Indian policy, and the rival contention that there has been a shift in the nature of the ideology informing policy, seem inadequate. One is led either to a spurious dichotomy between ideology and pragmatism, or to a glossing over of the decline of ideological initiative on the government's part. The picture can only be filled out by considering the whole relationship between ideology and policy, and the way in which this has developed and changed in the context of Congress's expanding and shrinking power base.

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